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BIOGRAPHY  
OF THE  
REV. HENRY AARON STERN, D.D.

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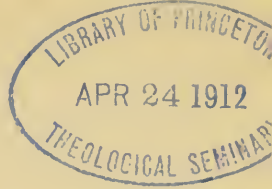
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Yours Truly

Henry A. Leno



# BIOGRAPHY

OF THE

REV. HENRY AARON STERN, D.D.,

FOR MORE THAN

4  
FORTY YEARS A MISSIONARY AMONGST THE JEWS:

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS LABOURS AND TRAVELS

IN

MESOPOTAMIA, PERSIA, ARABIA, TURKEY, ABYSSINIA, AND  
ENGLAND.

*ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS*

TAKEN CHIEFLY BY HIMSELF.

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BY THE

REV. ALBERT AUGUSTUS ISAACS, M.A.,

VICAR OF CHRIST CHURCH, LEICESTER.

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## EDITORIAL PREFACE.

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I have accepted the honourable and responsible office of preparing the Biography of HENRY AARON STERN, without hesitation, not only as “a labour of love,” but also, as a tribute of affection to the memory of a cherished friend and brother in the Lord, and a distinguished servant of God. In the compilation of this Biography, the materials which I have had at my disposal have been more than abundant, and the difficulty proportionate, in culling from fields, so rich in their resources, that which might be most suitably and usefully employed. My desire has been, that the editorial part of the narrative should entirely subserve the great aim of setting forth my friend’s labours and experiences in his own words so that it might be truly said that “he being dead yet speaketh.” To the great Head of the Church I commit this work, in the confident hope that it will serve to promote His glory; and with the prayer, that every reader may be enabled by Divine grace, to follow Henry Aaron Stern, as he followed Christ.

A. A. ISAACS.

*July*, 1886.





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## CHAPTER I.

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Few offices are so difficult to fulfil as that of the Biographer. The materials, out of which he is required to construct his work, are necessarily imperfect and perplexing. The faithful and complete delineation of a life, is entirely beyond his grasp. The springs of thought and action,—the processes by which a life has assumed its form and proportions, are to him almost unknown. He can trace events, weigh circumstances, and draw conclusions. But these are more or less uncertain, and, it may be, would have been repudiated by the very person whose motives and objects he desires faithfully to represent. Even when he may have the assistance of a diary, or a record of the experience and feelings of the deceased, it does not necessarily happen that a true light is thrown upon his picture. Such a diary is invaluable as a record of passing events; but when it attempts to delineate the secret workings of the heart, there is generally a morbidity and unnaturalness about the narrative, which discourages sympathy, and neutralizes conviction.

Nor is this all. The readers of a Biography look upon it from different points of view. If they have never seen, nor known the person, whose history is brought before them—if no public and well-known occurrences have either excited their admiration, or provoked their censure, a neutral tint tones down the record. But there are others, who have known with a greater or lesser intimacy the departed one, and who regard the Biography in the light of their own experience. Some may have known him under certain special and unfavourable conditions. This colours and distorts their opinions, as to what such a Biography should have been. Others,

knew him in all the intimate and loving relations of daily life, or in the varied labours which raised him above the ordinary rank of mankind. To these, there should be nothing to mar the symmetry of the figure, or to cast a shadow over the bewitching landscape. Between one and the other, therefore, the Biographer has to steer his way. All upon which he looks, he knows to be more or less distorted and defiled by the influence and power of sin. He describes an imperfect character: he relates the events of an imperfect life; and he seeks to embalm the memory of one, of whom the utmost which can be said is this; "She (he) hath done what she (he) could."

Are we, therefore, to infer that Biographies are either valueless or undesirable? This is far from being the case. God Himself has graciously encouraged us in the preservation of such memorials, by the introduction of many into the narratives of His Holy Word. We are conscious that He who seeth all things, He who knoweth the thoughts and intents of the heart, alone could set forth "what was in man." But He has given us models and examples of the manner in which uninspired minds, and weak and faltering hands should chronicle the history of their fellow men. How varied is the sacred delineation! With some it is pure history, without any reference to character; with some, there is nobility of soul, and earnestness of purpose, to stimulate; with others, a corrupt life, and an untoward end, to warn and to alarm. One spotless, perfect and magnificent life, alone, rises above, and among those of the works of God's hands—it is that of "The Son of Man."

It is only at a remote distance, and with feeble steps that we can attempt to follow the divine guidance. But it is well that the attempt should be made, especially when the theme of our history is that of one, who occupied a foremost place in the annals of Missionary enterprise. HENRY AARON STERN was no ordinary man. My own knowledge and observation had for many years led me to conclude, as I have often so expressed myself, that he was "the greatest Missionary of modern times." Nor was it unadvisedly, that in the funeral Sermon, which it was my privilege to preach after his death, that I represented him to have been "a king

among men." I shall not be so ungracious as to define any features in his character, which may have been open to unfavourable criticism,—but as a keen observer of men,—possessing, it may be, rather exceptional opportunities for studying human nature under varied conditions of life, I may with confidence say, that I have rarely met with his equal in all that gives dignity and greatness to humanity. The admiration, and friendly intercourse of the great, had no special attractions for him, and had no influence on his demeanour. He never sought great things for himself. His character was one of absolute simplicity. That simplicity extended itself to all his habits and pursuits, and was one of the great instruments through which his life was preserved under conditions most detrimental to health. At the same time, he possessed a very powerful frame, admirably fitted to meet the hardships, and to encounter the fatigue, which were inseparable from some of his missionary journeys. His mental gifts and powers were of no ordinary kind. As a writer and a speaker there was peculiar brilliancy in his mode of expressing himself, and a striking adaptation of his language to the theme which he discussed. He possessed invincible firmness of character—deterred by no obstacles—a firmness, which never allowed possible difficulties to embarrass. He was always influenced by a considerate regard for the interests and well being of others. None of his fellow-labourers were ever humiliated by any assertion of his superiority, although they lived and laboured in concert with him, under a consciousness that they were sustained by a master-mind. Some of the events which are hereafter to be related, will show, how subordinated to his great work were all his earthly interests, and how he never allowed any advantages presented for his acceptance, for one moment to be entertained, which might even by inference bring reproach upon his calling. Above all, he had but one desire—a desire which shed its radiance over every event of his Christian life; and that was, "to win Christ, and to be found in Him," and in this spirit to make known to his fellow sinners, and especially to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, "the unsearchable riches of Christ." For this he lived, and in this he died. He now rests from labours of which he might with justice have said, with the great Apostle of the Gentiles:

“Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

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## CHAPTER II.

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### EARLY LIFE.

Germany has been the nursery, in which has been trained and nurtured, a multitude of faithful men of God, who have devoted themselves to Missionary work. It would almost appear, that the gracious and overruling providence of God, has seen fit to balance, or counteract the unbelief and indifference which have so painfully distinguished that part of the Continent of Europe, by fostering within its confines an unusual number of gifted and eminent believers, and an army of Missionaries for the promulgation of the Gospel. The sacred duty of going into all the world, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to every creature—a duty which had been hidden under the superstitions of the middle ages—first exhibited returning life and activity among the Teutonic race. The annals of Missionary effort in the heathen world bear witness to this, and the records of Missions to the Jews attest the same fact. Although it was in England that the flame of love to Israel was first rekindled, Germany has chiefly supplied the agents by which this love has been practically exhibited. From the ranks of the early converts from Judaism to Christianity, a large proportion of the most able and successful Missionaries were obtained. Their attainments and training eminently fitted them for the work ; nor have they generally been less distinguished by that zeal and enterprise, which were essential to the effectual discharge of their duties. It has often been questioned whether Jewish converts are the best agents through whom the Gospel message should be conveyed to their unbelieving brethren. But this question receives a satisfactory solution, in the abundant, and it may almost be said, the exceptional blessing, which has generally accompanied their ministry. The subject of this Memoir was himself destined to illustrate this fact. It may be said that his Jewish origin never raised up a barrier between himself and



his own people, but rather assured them of the sympathy and fellowship of one, who had had personal experience of their wants and difficulties. Yet it would have been difficult for anyone, who may have had the opportunity of knowing the conditions under which the early life of young Stern was passed, to have conceived the possibility of his eventually becoming one of the most undaunted and honoured warriors of the Cross. The careful observance of Jewish usage, and the strict conformity to all the requirements of the Synagogue ritual, which distinguished his parents, might reasonably have been expected to have left a fixed and lasting effect upon the mind and principles of the son. Yet it would appear, that in his early life, he was impressed with the hollowness of this burdensome ritual, which even the devotion and consistency of his parents could not dispel. The light and liberty of the Gospel of Christ, was eventually to throw into darker relief the shadows of Jewish observance, through which so many of his people were vainly endeavouring to grope their way.

HENRY AARON STERN was born in the village of Unterreichenbach, near Gelnhausen, in the Duchy of Hesse Cassel, on the 11th of April, 1820. He was the youngest of the family, and his parents, whose names were Aaron and Hannah, regarded him with that peculiar solicitude and affection which generally falls to the lot of the last and youngest of several children. His early life was one of gentle but firm discipline. The resources, as it would appear, of his father, and his conviction concerning the best manner in which the child should be trained, did not admit of indulgence in the luxuries and superfluities of life. His mid-day meal at school (to which he had two miles to walk) consisted of dry bread and apples, or such other fruit as might be in season. A hard-boiled egg was an unusual luxury, or a cup of coffee as an accompaniment to his frugal supper. It was rarely, except on the Jewish Sabbath, that he was allowed to eat animal food. To some, it might appear, that such fare was inadequate to the preservation of health. But Henry Stern grew in physical strength as well as in mental vigour. In the years, then future, of trial and of want, when the most simple food alone were attainable, it would be found how invaluable and providential were the training and abstinence of his youth. Even in a matter





THE JUDENGASSE, FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAINE.



apparently so insignificant, the foundation was being laid for those qualities, by which he would be enabled to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

When about twelve years of age, his father sent him to a school of considerable repute, in the important town of Frankfort-on-the-Maine. Over this school presided Drs. Creizenoch and Jopson, and subsequently Dr. Jost. All these were men of great intellectual attainments, and Dr. Jost in particular obtained great eminence as a Jewish writer. After the manner of many pedagogues, the rod was one of the incentives of which he made frequent use, in stimulating the mental progress of his pupils. This did not commend him to the affections of many of the boys, and Henry Stern was among a number who conspired to carry out a practical joke at the expense of their too severe preceptor. They managed to dissect the master's chair, and then to place the parts together, so that it might appear as usual. The consequence which naturally followed, was that the chair of the Doctor gave way, on his attempting to take his seat. He was furious at this outrage, and having obliged the guilty pupils to confess, he beat them with such severity, that they never from that time, attempted a practical joke of the kind.

Henry Stern's family removed from Unterreichenbach to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and occupied a house in the celebrated and picturesque "Judengasse," or Jewish quarter. This was particularly favourable to the school-life of the young student. During this time, it was the fond desire of his father that he should be educated for the medical profession. It was the only one of the liberal professions for which a Jew was then eligible. The laws of the land prohibited their admission into any other. The boy concurred in this wish, but intercourse with some of his school-fellows gave another bent to his inclinations. Many of them were being trained for a commercial life, and the prospect of visiting many lands, and of obtaining wealth in such a vocation, induced him to request his father to permit him to pursue the same calling. To this his father reluctantly consented, and the free city of Hamburg offering unusual advantages to those engaged in commercial pursuits, at seventeen years of age Henry Stern journeyed thither in furtherance of this object. Another link in those gracious provi-

dences was here forged, which were eventually to lead to results, then unknown and unsought.

At that time, one of the most devoted and successful Missionaries of "the London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews" was located at Hamburg. Amongst the expedients which Mr. Moritz adopted for attracting the attention of the Jews, was the exhibition of a number of books, in Hebrew and German, in a glass case, in the immediate neighbourhood of his house. The open pages attracted the curiosity of the youth, and again and again he would pause on his way in order to read their contents. He ascertained, on enquiry, that the owner of the glass case was a "prediger" who sought the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith. This he regarded as preposterous. He had not at that time arrived at man's estate, and like most Jewish youths, was devoid of all genuine religious principle; yet the Christian books, which from time to time he had the opportunity of reading, convinced him, that the creed of the Christians was far more rational than the burdensome ritual imposed by the Rabbis.

It was in the year 1839 that Henry Stern received an offer of a good appointment in London. With eager expectation he accepted the offer, and sailed for the great centre of commercial life and progress. But his sanguine expectations were about to be rudely crushed. On his arrival in London, he found that the firm by which he expected to have been employed, had failed; and that no other opening presented itself by which he might pursue the object of his journey. Day by day his efforts to obtain employment were unsuccessful, and his slender resources were becoming exhausted. His pride forbade his return either to Hamburg or Frankfort. He was unwilling to own to his friends that his hopeful undertaking had been worse than fruitless. His energetic and self-reliant spirit began to quail, before a prospect so dark and unpromising.

One Sunday afternoon, a young fellow-lodger invited him to accompany him to Palestine Place Chapel. This had for many years been the centre of the operations of "the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews." Young Stern's companion led him to think, that it would be an opportunity for seeing what was going on among those whom they called "apostates." Having



no other engagement, he agreed to go. The service that afternoon was performed by the late revered Dr. McCaul. The young man was greatly impressed with all that he saw and heard. Under the influence of those impressions, he repaired again to Palestine Place the next day, and having the opportunity of a long conversation with the late Rev. J. C. Reichardt, whose affectionate and pious demeanour greatly struck him, the favourable impressions of the preceding day were confirmed. These visits were frequently renewed; the Messiah of the Old Testament was always the subject of conversation, and it appeared to the young Israelite as a singular coincidence, that in London, as in Hamburg, he had been brought into contact with Christianity and Christians, without any design of his own. He now resolved to read the New Testament, with the assurance that if it did him no good, it could do him no harm. As he expressed himself; "To my surprise, the lessons it inculcated, the moral precepts it enjoined, and the characters it portrayed, appeared to me wonderful and extraordinary. No such perfect person, as these publicans and fishermen described, had ever appeared on earth. Whence did they procure their model? Whence their inspiration? The volume I had began to read with indifference, I now read with attention. If there be a Saviour, I mentally exclaimed, it must be Jesus. No one ever exhibited such love, put forth such supernatural energy, nor uttered such words of wisdom. I longed to be His disciple, but dreaded the grief the intelligence would inflict on my parents."

None but those who have passed through the deep waters of conviction and conversion, can understand the mental and moral suffering, to which an enquiring and enlightened son of Abraham is almost invariably exposed. His perplexities arise, not merely from the *primâ facie* difficulty of accepting doctrines and principles to which he has been hitherto a stranger. The impression forces itself upon his mind, that he is about to sever every tie which bind him to those whom he most tenderly loves. The national sentiment, which has kept his people separate from all the other nations of the world, is about to receive a rude shock; and by all those whom he has been taught to revere and love, he knows that he will be regarded in future as an apostate and an outcast. The declarations from his

own inspired Scriptures, concerning the curse which must inevitably descend upon all those who serve and worship other gods, force themselves upon his memory ; and the fear of controverting one of the most positive commands, and acting in direct disobedience to the will and desires of his parents, wounds the most tender susceptibilities of his heart. Those who had an acquaintance with the character of Henry Stern, will easily understand, that the conflict which agitated his mind must have been most agonizing. The deepest convictions, and the most positive evidence could alone support and carry him onward, in the path on which he had entered. He himself records, that he was again and again on the brink of despair. His slender means also were gradually diminishing, and he was driven to the necessity of pawning his watch and books, in order to supply his daily wants. However sorely pressed by the necessities of each day, he felt that he could not conscientiously write to his father, or other relatives, for assistance. The change which his belief and convictions had undergone, led him to shrink from a course, which might savour of hypocrisy.

In his intercourse with Mr. Reichardt, these difficulties were mentioned by the young enquirer. Mr. Reichardt was at that time the Superintendent of "the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution," which had been established for the purpose of giving employment to converts and enquirers. The trades of printing and bookbinding were there taught. A fair test was in this way given of the sincerity of those who professed a desire to become Christians, and a useful trade acquired, by which they might be enabled to earn their own bread. "In all labour there is profit." As far as we may judge, the occupation of a lowly carpenter was sanctified by the personal service of our blessed Lord. But it must have been no light trial to Henry Stern, that the humble trade of a printer was to take the place of a vocation, which, he had ardently believed, would ensure to him an honourable, and probably a prominent position in society. But he had now determined to cast in his lot with the people of God, and to endure reproach for Christ's sake. The proposal was accepted ; and after a short interval, he was admitted into the Institution, through the portals of which many have passed, who have attained distinguished positions in the vineyard of the Lord.

### CHAPTER III.

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#### THE OPERATIVE JEWISH CONVERTS' INSTITUTION AND THE HEBREW COLLEGE.

It is well known, that in times of old, many of the kings and potentates of the earth, were instructed, from early years, in some useful trade. The lesson was thereby taught, that some reversal might take place in their social condition, and that they should be in a position to face the possible frowns of fortune, by the ability to earn their own livelihood, by means of some honest employment. There was a discipline in this practice, and an amount of self-reliance cultivated, which, when this rule was fairly observed, was calculated to exert a favourable influence on the life and character of such persons. When, therefore, Henry Stern became a learner in the art of printing, he was commencing an honourable pursuit, which, in proportion to the attention and conscientious effort which he might manifest, was certain to be a help to him, whatever might be the issues of the future. There were many of the surroundings which were distasteful to him, and much of pride to be overcome. But "the reproach of Christ" was becoming to him "greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." There were many of his brethren of the house of Israel who had sought the same path of independence, and whose faith and constancy were undergoing the same test as that through which he was about to pass. He also knew, that, being relieved from any anxiety concerning the supply of his daily wants, he would now have a fuller opportunity of studying the great questions, which had already so favourably impressed him, in favour of Christianity.

The young enquirer threw the same diligence and energy into this lowly vocation, which characterised every action of his subse-

quent career. He soon became very expert as a printer, in the work of which he acquired a more thorough knowledge of the English language. And his progress and attainments were such, that, notwithstanding his foreign training and education, he was in an unusually short time raised from the position of an apprentice to that of a journeyman.

But those were sad and sorrowful days. One of his companions, now a clergyman, of the Church of England, relates, how often their hearts were bowed down with grief, when meditating upon the condition in which they were placed. They were now cut off by those to whom they were bound by all the ties of natural affection. Intercourse with them had ceased, and they knew that they were mourned over as those who were dead. They had truly forsaken father, mother, and kindred, and all whom they held dear, in order that they might obtain the knowledge of Him, whom to know is eternal life.

The love which Henry Stern bore towards those to whom he had become an alien, was unchanged. A time, too, would eventually arrive, when he would be able to show to his father in particular, that the change in his religious convictions, and his acceptance of the Christian revelation as the essential supplement of what had been recorded by Moses and the Prophets, had only served to intensify his regard for his kindred. When, in subsequent years, his improved circumstances enabled him to minister to the wants of his aged parent, the old man responded in language, which showed that he was not insensible to the power which had wrought so effectually in the heart of his child. "I can never," he wrote, "repay you for all you have done for your old father, but I give thanks and pray daily to God, that He may give you happiness and blessing." And Dr. Poper, then the Missionary of the London Society at Frankfort, who had frequent intercourse with the father, wrote thus:—"May the Lord God abundantly reward into your own bosom the child's affection you are manifesting towards your father. You glorify God our Saviour by so doing, and it is delightful for me to hear, when speaking to your father and other of your relatives, of the Gospel of the love of God, to hear remarks from their lips clearly indicating



that your life and conduct, your kindness and affection towards your aged father in particular, has caused them to look upon Christ, and the doctrines of the New Testament, with different feelings, more respect, and higher regard."

The preparation of enquirers for the rite of Baptism, has always been a matter of serious concern among the Missionaries to the Jews. It has been considered necessary to keep them for a lengthened period on the list of catechumens, so as to ensure, as far as possible, their careful preparation—their thorough instruction in the doctrines and principles of Christianity; and further, to allow the fullest test to be given of their constancy and sincerity. No exception to this general rule was made in the case of Henry Stern. He shared in all the advantages which the judicious and able instruction of Mr. Reichardt, and others engaged in the work, could afford. The time arrived when the now ripened desires of his heart were to be attained. He had given the most satisfactory evidence that he was a true Nathaniel, in whom was no guile; and on March the 15th, 1840, he received the rite of Baptism in the Chapel of the Society, in which he had first heard the message of salvation. After an interval of forty-five years, in that very House of Prayer, his funeral Sermon was preached, and the solemn fact commemorated; that this soldier of Christ, who had not been ashamed in baptism "to confess the faith of Christ crucified," had laid down the arms of his warfare, and for ever entered into the joy of his Lord.

The conduct of Henry Stern, during the whole period of his stay in the Operative Institution, was irreproachable. His piety, abilities, and general attainments, in process of time, convinced those who were associated with him as his instructors, that he possessed considerable fitness for Missionary work; so that at the expiration of two years, the Committee felt themselves justified in recommending that he should be admitted into the Hebrew College. The Rev. J. C. Reichardt, whose gentle dealings with the young enquirer, had in the first instance proved so attractive, had continued to fill the post of Superintendent. On August 9th, 1842, he reported to the Committee that, "with his entire concurrence, Henry Stern had applied for admission into the Hebrew College, and that having been accepted by the Committee of the London Society, he would enter

the College in the course of a short time. This was accompanied by a letter from the young inmate, expressing his gratitude for the benefits he had enjoyed while in the Institution." The following Resolution was then passed:—"That the conduct of Henry Stern during his stay in the Institution has been such as to afford the Committee unqualified satisfaction; and they therefore hear with the utmost pleasure of his reception as a student of the Hebrew College, having every encouragement to believe, that, with God's blessing, he will prove hereafter a faithful labourer among his brethren according to the flesh." With this *testamur*, he bade farewell to the scene of his first great trials and his first success. To the inexperienced, it might have been thought, that much valuable time had been lost; but in reality the discipline through which he had passed, and the manner in which he had been enabled to attain some excellence in a useful and not uninteresting occupation, were among those many conditions under which God, in His all-wise providence, had been preparing him for future usefulness and blessing.

The Rev. Dr. McCaul was at that time, Principal of the Hebrew College. His qualifications for this office were unique. From early years his sympathies had been enlisted in the Jewish cause, and this had led him to consecrate his ripened manhood to Missionary work on their behalf. His knowledge of the Hebrew tongue had been perfected by constant intercourse with learned Jews in the kingdom of Poland, and so great were his attainments, that even among them he was regarded as an authority in Biblical and Talmudical exegesis. No work could be more congenial to his tastes and desires than the training of young Israelites for Missionary work, and the period of his administration of the College as its first Principal, was distinguished by an unusual measure of success among the students placed under his care. In Henry Stern he found a devoted and able pupil. Among the qualifications which he possessed for the work to which he was about to be called, was his knowledge of the Hebrew, German, French, as well as English languages, in the acquisition of the last of which, he soon showed himself to be a master. He had also a fair acquaintance with Latin and Greek. In less than two years, he was among those who were pre-

sented to the Committee of the London Society as being fully qualified to enter upon Jewish Missionary work. The following Resolution of the Committee was passed on January 9th, 1844:—"That Mr. Stern be appointed a Missionary to Bussorah and Bagdad, —to reside at Bussorah, as the beginning of a Mission to the Jews in Chaldea and Persia." "That Mr. Murray Vicars be head of the Mission, and that the Bishop of Jerusalem be requested to admit Mr. Stern as a candidate for Holy Orders." To all those who have been called by the Spirit of God to the work of the Ministry, the approach of the time, when they are to enter upon the duties of this office, brings with it the most solemnizing thoughts. It is not difficult to conceive the depth and intensity of the reflections which agitated the heart of Henry Stern, as he saw the door so wondrously opened to him, of absolute dedication to the service of his divine Master, and usefulness in the Ministry of the Word.

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## CHAPTER IV.

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### JERUSALEM.

The prospect which presented itself to Henry Stern was necessarily one of deep and sacred interest. Amidst the turmoil of business, and the worldly advantages which reward the energy and perseverance of the Jewish people in various parts of the world, it is easy to understand, how likely they are to forget the home of their nation, and the land which God gave to Abraham and to his seed by an everlasting covenant. An avowed indifference to the hopes and anticipations which the Word of God identifies with the future of Israel, is not uncommon among those, who would repudiate the insinuation, that they lack patriotism, or concern in the national welfare. But the affections and desires of every thoughtful and pious Jew turn towards Jerusalem, and the promises of an unchangeable God give vitality to the expectation, that, "He that scattered Israel will gather them as a shepherd doth his flock." It is probable that thoughts of the land of his fathers had often found a place in the reflective mind of young Stern, but he may have regarded it as among those scenes of past glory and future blessedness, which he was never likely to behold. And now, it was to become a great reality. He was about to enter upon the work to which his heart and powers had been consecrated; and his admission into the Ministry of the Word, was to take place in the Holy City, around which were gathered the most hallowed associations of the past. If the term may be employed, his lot was an enviable one. It had burst upon him like sunshine after a rather lengthened period of darkness and suffering, and he entered with thankfulness into every arrangement, which had been made by the Committee of the London Society.

It was on the 5th of January, 1844, that Mr. Stern was officially informed of his appointment as a Missionary of the Society, and on the 27th of February he appeared before the Committee, to receive their final instructions and to take his leave. On that occasion, he, and each of his fellow-students, were presented by the Committee with a copy of Bagster's Hebrew, Greek, and English Bible; in itself a full and sufficient indication, that he was now sent forth to "preach the Word."

The facilities for travel were not as great then as they are at the present day. Sailing vessels, as well as steamers, conveyed passengers, and carried on the trade with the Mediterranean. The resolution of the London Committee directed that the band of Missionaries should travel as second class passengers, if they took passage in a steamer; or they might proceed as first class passengers if they went in a sailing vessel. The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Murray Vicars, and Mr. P. H. Sternschuss (who had already been ordained at Jerusalem), Mr. Stern, Mr. F. G. Kleinhenn, and another fellow-student. The first two, were appointed with Mr. Stern, to labour in the Mission at Bagdad and Bussorah.

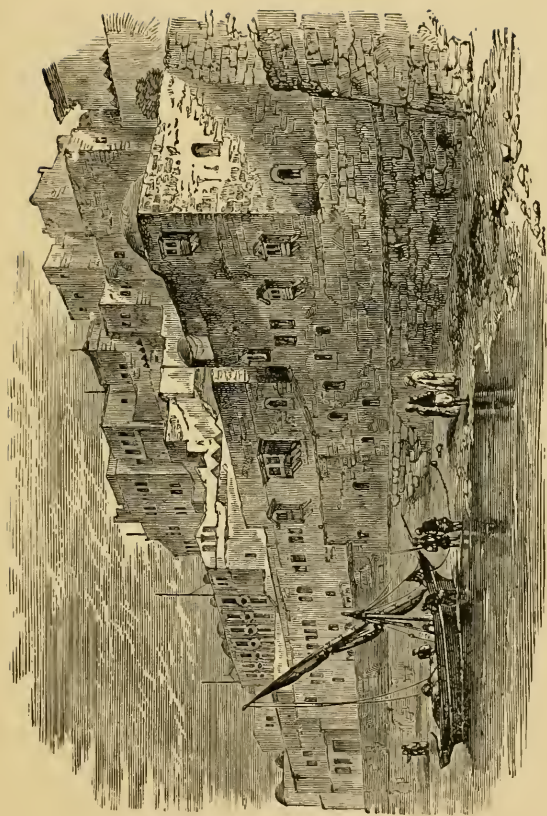
Details are unnecessary concerning the departure of the Missionaries, and their arrival on the coast of the Holy Land. Every object on which they gazed was fraught with interest. The plains and mountains of Judea, were the witnesses of the wonderful works which had written their record upon the generations of the past. Every outline and every feature of the landscape which presented itself to their eyes, set forth the faithfulness of God, and the truth of His Holy Word. Amidst its desolation and apparent barrenness, they read the prophecies of the past; and saw in their complete fulfilment, the evidence, that nothing had failed, or could fail, of all that the Lord had spoken.

The Anglican Bishopric of Jerusalem had been founded only about three years before this time. It had been offered to Dr. McCaul, who declined the appointment, on the ground that he considered that none but a son of Abraham ought to fill this office. The Reverend Michael Solomon Alexander had thereupon been nominated to the

Bishopric, and no appointment could have been more felicitous or promising. His short episcopate had most favourably impressed those, who had encouraged the hope, that it would be made by God a channel of much blessing to Palestine and the adjoining countries. But he was cut off in the midst of usefulness; and it is probable, that the ordination of Mr. Stern was amongst the last official acts which distinguished his episcopate. The Protestant Church on Mount Zion (Christ Church) had not at that time been erected. The services were held in the Chapel of St. James, which after that time was converted into Mission premises, and is now occupied as the Boys' School. It was in this structure that Mr. Stern and Mr. Vicars received Deacon's orders, on the 14th July, 1844. All the surroundings of this occurrence were peculiarly solemn and impressive. The conditions under which he was about to enter on his work, the city in which his ordination took place, and the fact, that after an interval of many generations, the hands of a Jew were again employed in consecrating one of his own nation to the work of the ministry, formed a remarkable epoch in his own life, and an event in the history of the Holy City. From all these circumstances he might gather confidence and courage, and regard them as happy auguries of grace and blessing from on high, on the service in which he was now engaged.

Mr. Stern wrote as follows to the Committee:—"I am happy to inform you, that, on Sunday, July 14, Mr. Vicars and myself were admitted to the sacred office of the ministry by the Bishop of Jerusalem, who on that occasion preached a most powerful and affecting sermon; and I believe that every one present was inspired with that holy feeling which the solemn services of our Church, Mount Zion, and the scenery around, tend to effect. Our examination took place four days previous to the ordination, and both the Bishop and his Chaplain expressed their satisfaction. I trust that the Lord will assist and enable me by my ministry to convey the truth of the Gospel to those of my brethren, who are yet walking in darkness, and the regions of the shadow of death. I have already entered upon my ministerial duties. I have preached three times; twice in German and once in English, and have also read the morning prayers in Hebrew for a fortnight."





JAFFA.





At the request of the Bishop, Mr. Stern proceeded, in advance of the party, to Beyrout. The Missionary-Chaplain at that place, Mr. Winbolt, was in ill health, and Mr. Stern was enabled to take his duty for a time, ere proceeding to Damascus.

The other Missionaries designated for Bagdad and Bussorah, remained at Jerusalem till the 2nd day of September. This interval was doubtless usefully employed in obtaining such information as might throw light upon the Scriptures, and afford them facilities for the thorough accomplishment of their mission. The most easy mode of transit was adopted. They retraced their steps to Jaffa, and proceeded thence by sea to Beyrout. From Beyrout they travelled to Damascus, from which point alone, could the caravan journey to Bagdad be accomplished. The route from Beyrout is one of great archæological importance, and full of suggestive local associations. The noble and picturesque mountains of the Lebanon, the snowy peak of Hermon, and the majestic ruins of Baalbec, surmised to be the "Baalath" of Solomon's times, could not fail to impress and instruct our travellers. And so they approached the ancient and still flourishing city of Damascus, before which Paul of Tarsus, the persecutor, was struck down by the hand and power of God, and became the greatest witness to that Truth which he had sought to destroy. Here they rested for a time, awaiting the departure of the caravan, under the escort of which they had arranged to proceed to Bagdad.

Arrangements were made for the service of five riding camels, and two for the conveyance of baggage and provisions, including the indispensable supply of water, which was stored in some twenty large skin or leathern bottles. Several muleteers and attendants accompanied them, being essential to the protection as well as the comfort of the travellers.

## CHAPTER V.

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### FROM DAMASCUS TO BAGDAD.

The journeys of Missionaries are of a different character to those of the generality of travellers. It is essential, that, as far as possible, the expenses of such journeys should be circumscribed. In order to accomplish this, the travellers are obliged to accommodate themselves to time and circumstances. Their movements must be regulated by the persons who conduct a caravan, or other conditions, under which the wants and intentions of all who are bound to any particular spot, may be best attained. This will account for much of the discomfort and suffering which the following pages will relate. Our traveller had no choice as to the season, or accompaniments of his journeys. A caravan would start at such a time, and without the protection it would afford, or an outlay far beyond the means at his disposal, he could not proceed on his way. The inhabitants of the country would probably be insensible to the inconveniences, or the climatic risks, which an inhabitant of more northern climes would be exposed to. The whole would therefore be organised and conducted, so as best to serve the purpose of the many. The Missionary, therefore, has simply to encounter the burning heat of the desert, or the cold and exposure of mountain districts, and thus to go on his way, in the hope of bringing to those who are lying "in darkness and in the shadow of death" the light of the Gospel of Christ. Such were the prospects which presented themselves to Mr. Stern and his fellow labourers, in making preparations for their first missionary journey.

It was at the close of September, 1844, that the caravan started from Damascus, under the guidance of which they were to proceed to Bagdad. Few journeys could be more trying to Europeans. The predatory Arabs of the desert hovered about in every direction, and demanded the incessant watchfulness of the wild soldiers whose duty it was to protect the caravan. Rest by day, and travel by night, was oftentimes the course adopted. This was in itself most wearisome, especially when it continued day after day. Swarms of flies, and myriads of mosquitoes were the travellers' incessant companions. The swinging movement of the camel, and the discomfort of the seat on which each was perched, aggravated the sufferings of those who were exposed to the burning heat of the desert. Mr. Stern, knowing that the route passed within a short distance of the world-renowned Palmyra, had stipulated with the Sheik that he should be conducted to its magnificent remains. But in this he was to learn, that the Arab is not more faithful to a pledge, than his European brother.

"According to the Sheik's promise, long before the sun had pierced the golden clouds which shaded its rising, I was again with him. He was just engaged in sipping his eternal coffee, and apparently in good humour. I was requested to sit down on his carpet, but apologized, telling him that the sun would not wait for me; and as it would soon get hot, I was anxious to start at once for Tadmor.

" 'Tadmor,' exclaimed he, 'Agaiah, don't you know that the Anizee are encamped there, who, by the life of my beard, will make you prisoner.'

" 'If they do, Sheik, you have nothing to risk.'

" 'Marshallah, have I not eaten your bread and salt, and are you not my son? Nothing to risk! My face would be as the blackness of night if anything unpleasant occurred to you.'

" 'Sheik, you have sworn and pledged yourself in Damascus to conduct me to Palmyra, and a true son of Ishmael never perjures himself.'

" 'I will fight every son of the Anizee; I will shed every drop of my blood in your defence; I will heap sorrow and woe upon your enemies.'

"And all this, with many other bold asseverations, he made with such a serious air, look, and gesture, quite peculiar to the imperturbable inhabitants of the desert, that I almost credited what he averred. But still I would not yield entirely to his evasions, and therefore with an unwavering determination insisted upon an escort to accompany me. This exhausted his patience, and with a sudden impulse he sprung from his seat, and bellowed out, loud enough to

be heard throughout the whole camp, 'You can take all the soldiers; but if the Anizee surprise us, and seize all we have, you will incur the responsibility.'

"He had scarcely uttered these words when scores of voices opposed the proposition, and as my own party coincided with the majority, I was obliged to succumb. I afterwards engaged two peasants from Palmyra to conduct me there and back, but a short whispered conversation with the Shiek produced a refusal to do so. I now resigned myself to my forlorn hopes, and sat down on the shaft of a polished pillar, and, with strained eyes, endeavoured to gain a distinct glimpse of the broken columns, mutilated sculptures, and shivered white porticos, of the celebrated city of Zenobia—the Tadmor in the wilderness."

The travellers at last reached the Euphrates, the sight of whose waters communicated new life to their wearied frames. On the borders of this historical stream stands the little town of Hit (the ancient *Is*), in which they were to have their first experience of missionary work among the Jews.

"We hastened (wrote Mr. Stern) to the black hovel of a Jewish silversmith, who kindly conducted us to the house of Rabbi Isaac, the reader of the synagogue. The worthy teacher of this isolated and despised Karaite community received us with the greatest cordiality, and seemed quite delighted to see persons from distant Europe, who knew the sacred language, and whose creed, according to his idea, had so much of the purity of their own system of belief. After pipes and coffee, we proceeded to the synagogue, a sable dusky room, consisting simply of four smoked mud walls. The floor was covered with a tattered piece of carpet, and a small stool stood in one corner. I took my seat on the ground, and surrounded by the whole Jewish population, entered into a friendly discussion. They were evidently struck with the doctrines we preached, and did not evince the least hatred, violence, or opposition, against the blessed truths which we proclaimed. The Rabbi escorted us to the ferry, and several times enquired after the "*Kitab Saheer*" (meaning the New Testament), which he was anxious to possess, yet too timid to ask for. In the afternoon, he and several other Jews returned our visit, and at the same time brought a present of bread, eggs, and dates; they remained upwards of two hours in my tent, and attentively listened to the passages of Scripture which I expounded. They acquiesced in all that was said, and dilated with delight on a subject so important and momentous. We sold them four Bibles and five New Testaments, for which they willingly paid. They told me that their number had formerly been very considerable, but tyranny and oppression had extended their withering curse to all classes, and visibly diminished the population of every hamlet, village, and town. These few isolated and solitary Jews, hated by

their bigoted, rabbinical brethren, and strangers to those sympathetic ties that sweeten the bitter waters which constantly mingle with the stream of life, can only find comfort and satisfaction among the tombs of their venerated sires, whose memory they respect and revere. They appear, however, happy and contented in the midst of their Ishmaelitish brethren, who suffer them, unmolested, to gain by the work of their hands a poor but honest subsistence. We protracted our stay at Hit several days, which time was profitably employed in continual intercourse with them."

On the 18th of October the caravan arrived at Bagdad. Amidst the salutations which welcomed most of the travellers, Mr. Stern wrote:—"We were the only party whom no eager expectants hailed, no acquaintance anticipated, and no countenances welcomed. We felt that we were solitary and alone—strangers, and in a strange country."

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## CHAPTER VI.

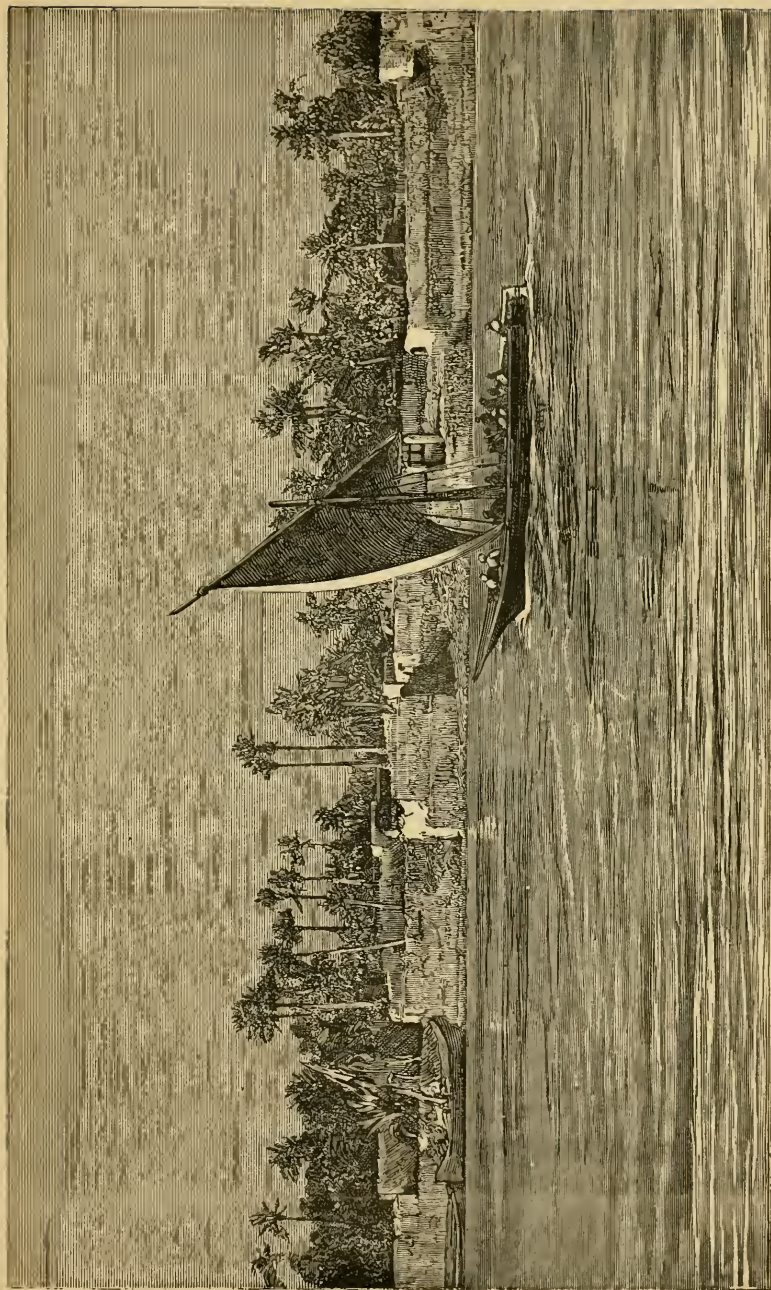
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### THE MISSION TO BAGDAD.

It is desirable that a sketch should be given of the well-known oriental city in which Mr. Stern began his labours. It need hardly be said, that all those regions have been from the time of Mahomed, the scene of the dominion and corruption of his followers. Of the place and the people, Mr. Stern wrote as follows:—

“Man, like a plant, grows, thrives, and flourishes under the genial influence of those methods which Infinite Wisdom has ordained for the development and perpetuation of the human species; but wherever debasing indulgence and imbecilitating vice predominate, the very juice of the vine becomes poison, and every blessing is turned into a curse. The corrupt doctrines of the Arabian legislator, and the vile passions which spring out of his system, fully demonstrate this; and the most inveterate admirer of Mahomed must admit, that his Koran is very prejudicial to the spiritual and intellectual improvement of man, and the general welfare of society. A cursory glance at the population of Turkey and Persia afford a manifest proof of this assertion. Where are the crowded cities, the happy multitudes, the smiling fields, and the busy scenes of commerce and manufacture? I might, did it not break the thread of my narrative, advert to Hira, Anbar, and Ctesiphon, or cities erected by the desert conquerors themselves, as Bussorah, Kufah, &c., but I will confine myself to Bagdad. This city in its palmy days contained a million of people, who, as the native historians state, were all either potent nobles, or merchant princes; their houses were palaces, and their slaves the youth, bloom, and beauty of Europe and Asia; whilst at present it scarcely contains the eighteenth part of this vast population within its desolate and debris covered area. According to the latest census, it counts within its wall 40,000 Mahomedans, 1,500 Christians, and 16,000 Jews. The latter, as a striking illustration of the decay of Moslem power, wealth and industry, are the governing element of the place. They have their stored booths in every bazaar, occupy all the principal caravanseries





BAGDAD. VIEW OF THE TIGRIS FROM THE MISSION HOUSE.





with their merchandize, and entirely control the business of bankage and monopolies. They are all strictly rabbinical Jews, superstitious, bigoted, and intolerant; full of zeal for the Talmud and the traditions of the elders; scrupulous in the performance of all external rites of religion; ostentatious in their charity, piety, and devotion; tinctured with all the vices of their Mahommedan oppressors, and the errors of their pharisaical forefathers. They have three large and six small synagogues; the former are capable of holding 2,000, the latter from 100 to 600 individuals. Their rabbis are proud, haughty, vain, and capricious men; neither distinguished for their abilities, nor admired for their wisdom.

“Like their haughty ancestors, they scorn and reject the true Messiah, with an intense gaze they turn to Zion, and with yearning impatience expect the advent of a temporal prince, who will subdue their enemies, revenge their sufferings, build up the temple of their captive seer, and restore the departed glory of their nation, in that land whose history is engraven on the heart of Jew and Gentile, and which has been consecrated to the peculiar abode of the Shechina, and is emphatically styled “the city of God.” This people, who in their desert plains had thus for centuries indulged in the vain delightful dreams of future conquests, achievements and uninterrupted happiness, had never heard or read anything about our holy religion; and their amazement was, therefore, greatly heightened, when they saw three followers of the despised and rejected Nazarene in their place of exile, with the avowed purpose of teaching them a religion which they had hitherto regarded as a system of gross idolatry and palpable error. Curiosity, however, led many to our house; the rabbis themselves, attracted by the novelty, thronged our courts and rooms; the judicious discourses and pious exhortations aroused some, and shook the settled belief of others, and a feeble light was gradually rising, which threatened to disperse the impenetrable darkness that had enshrouded the plain of Shinar; a few came for instruction, and others to attend the daily Hebrew services.”

This was followed by a considerable awakening among the Jews. Two of the number, one of them being related to one of the chief rabbis, declared their conviction of the truth of the Christian faith, and their anxiety for further instruction. The chiefs of the community then saw, that they had allowed a freedom to the missionaries, which was now bearing fruit for which they were little prepared. The new enquirers were subjected to every form of persecution; each approach to the houses of the missionaries was carefully watched, and a “cherem,” or excommunication, pronounced against any, who might venture to have intercourse with them. This change

in what had appeared to be so hopeful a prospect, was no small trial of faith to the Christian ambassadors. Before the throne of grace they laid their difficulties and their wants, and relief and encouragement were vouchsafed to them from on High. The respect of the leading Jews for the character and faithfulness of the Missionaries, triumphed over their prejudices; and when any important ceremony, or great festival took place, they were invited to their dwellings, and received as honoured guests. Although a check had been given to their efforts, it did not deter them from the zealous and uncompromising pursuit of the great object of their mission.

Some of the practical effects which accompanied their ministry, were very remarkable. The chief Rabbi, being suspected of a disposition to embrace Christianity, had been deposed and banished from the town. Mr. Stern having heard that he had been released from confinement, and that the caravan in which he was a traveller, was only a few miles from the town, resolved to hasten after him, for the purpose of saying farewell.

“He seemed deeply touched when he saw me arrive. After the usual salutations, I immediately preferred my message, urged him no longer to prevaricate and strive against his inward conviction, waiting for earthly grandeur and dignities; not to tempt the Lord, nor deny His holy name any longer for worldly considerations. Tears stood in his eyes when I had finished, and he promised to seek further instruction either at Aleppo, whither he was then proceeding, or at Jerusalem, where I advised him to go. Having recommended him to the grace of our Lord, I returned to town, in order to be able to send him a New Testament, and several other Christian books, for which he begged me most anxiously, as the Jews had, during his imprisonment, taken all such books from his house. May the Lord in His mercy guide and direct him, and remove all obstacles out of his way.”

This chief Rabbi, on the occasion of a visit to the Missionaries, had observed concerning a native proselyte, employed as a colporteur, “I have closely watched Ezekiel since his baptism, and I find that a change has taken place in him. I would now trust his simple assertion, more than the oaths of a whole body of Jews.” The sincerity of an enquirer, was tested under the following trying circumstances:—

“A fortnight ago, the Nasi (the Jewish Prince) sent for him, and with bland affability said, ‘I hear that you are an adherent of the

new religion.' He calmly replied, 'No, my Lord, I believe in the religion of the Bible, and trust for salvation in the Messiah of Israel.' The Nasi replied, 'I do not wish to interfere with your faith in the Gospel, but insist that you divorce your wife.' He respectfully refused to acquiesce in this request, and as the Nasi knew that he could not legally compel him, he closed the interview by saying, 'Then you will restore her dowry.' His unconverted friends thought that this demand would intimidate him, since he had lost his own money by several bankruptcies in India, and was trading with his wife's fortune ; but instead of being discouraged, he settled all his accounts, disposed of every thing in his possession, and without a word of complaint satisfied the rigid claim of the partner of his life, and the mother of his five children."

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## CHAPTER VII.

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### BABYLON AND BUSSORAH.

The narrative of Mr. Stern's life would be incomplete, were there no reference to any of the principal spots which he visited at various times. But it will be seen, that he always combined with such visits, the object of his life and mission. He invariably traced out the scattered remnant of the tribes of Israel, and in most instances, proclaimed to them the message of redemption of which the majority of them had never hitherto heard. A journey from Bagdad to the site of the once celebrated *Babylon*, was undertaken, at the time when hindrances had been placed in the way of free intercourse with the Jews of the former place.

"Babylon (or Hillah), the city of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldean's 'excellency,' is one of the most remarkable witnesses to the faithfulness and power of God. It has become 'heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and an hissing.'" (Jer. li. 37). On every side the traveller beholds the monuments of the divine vengeance. "To a traveller who has walked among the monuments of Egypt, visited the marble temples of Palmyra, or reposed, as I have done myself, behind the polished sculptures of Persepolis; Babylon and the Birs awaken no sensations of wonder and admiration; but to the student of prophecy, who gazes upon the fallen palaces, demolished temples, and shattered walls, every mound and tumulus is a collateral evidence of divine revelation; the fascinating and attractive magnificence of the former is eclipsed, whilst in the latter he sees the verification of the awful sentence, 'Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.'"

The Jews of Bagdad had not been slack in circulating reports, which might excite prejudices in the minds of their brethren at Hillah. They refused either to listen, or to speak on religious subjects. The prospects of access to the people in these parts being

more than uncertain, the Missionaries returned to Bagdad. At the end of December, 1846, they embarked on board one of the boats which trade between Bagdad and Bussorah. It was to the latter place that Mr. Stern had originally been appointed, and although it was on more matured consideration determined that he should remain at Bagdad, it was deemed expedient that he should visit Bussorah, and extend his journeys in such directions as might open fields of missionary activity.

The regions through which the Tigris and Euphrates flow, have been renowned in the history of the past. Evidences presented themselves on every side of their former fertility, and the extent and magnificence of the cities which once flourished on their plains. The river voyage conducted them near the remains of Ctesiphon and Sileucia. The famous Arch of Khosroe was in the neighbourhood, and encouraged by the temporary delay of the vessel, Mr. Stern set out to visit it. "I had," he relates, "a fatiguing walk before I reached this wonder of antiquity, and I confess that, although I am no great enthusiast, yet the sight of this magnificent arch absorbed my whole attention, and made me forget my wearied feet, the boat, and the walk back. The Arch, or *Tauk-e-Kesea*, from the distance, owing to the flatness of the soil, has an insignificant appearance; but a nearer approach reveals to the eye the remains of a building worthy in every respect of the luxurious and extravagant monarch whose name it bears. There is no building in the East that can vie with it, in size, magnificence, or skill; the archway alone is 106 feet high, 153 deep, with a façade 284 feet long; it is ornamented with small arches and recesses, which were no doubt occupied by statues and symbolical images."

The town of *Bussorah* is situated at the mouth of the Tigris, at the head of the Persian Gulf. It is the port through which trade used to be carried on with Bagdad, and other parts of the interior. The London Society from time to time, sent thither cases of Bibles, for the use of the Missionaries, in the prosecution of their work. The town had so deteriorated from its former state, (both as regards its prosperity and the number of its population) that it needed little to prove, that it was a wise resolution which had led to its abandonment as a Missionary station. "Thirty years ago," Mr. Stern

recorded, "Bussorah contained upwards of sixty thousand inhabitants, it had a thriving trade, well-stored bazaars, and a happy, rich population; at present it does not contain eight thousand, its commerce (except that of dates) is destroyed, its opulent houses impoverished, the large caravanserais desolate, and the market, thronged by nations from all regions in the East, is now only frequented by a few sickly Persians, and some plundering Arabs." The Jews had in every respect shared in the decline, and accumulated miseries, of the place.

Onward, therefore, they sped to *Bushire*, the great port of Persia, on the Gulf of that name. The population of Bushire, consisting of but 2,000 persons, include representatives of all the oriental races, sects, and creeds. Amidst this chaos of superstition and unbelief, there was one spot at that time, from which the light of the Gospel shone. "Colonel Hennell, the political agent of the East India Company, an excellent devoted Christian officer, combined with his exemplary life, exhibits to the ignorant and misguided beings by whom he is surrounded, the beauty and sublimity of our divine religion. It was with sincere pleasure, that, during my abode in this benighted place, after the toils and labours of the week, after many hard struggles and severe combats with the opponents of light and knowledge, I could every Lord's-day mingle my voice in the praises and thanksgivings of the few, who collected together in the small chapel of the Residency."

The ministry of Mr. Stern was blessed in a remarkable manner in this place. The Lord opened the heart of a Jewish Mullah, called Elijahu. Notwithstanding the hatred and persecution to which he knew that he would be exposed, the convictions of his heart could not be stifled. "I have found the Messiah," was his rapturous exclamation. Two years passed away, during which Elijahu had devoted much time to the careful study of the Scriptures. He then expressed his desire to receive baptism at the hands of Mr. Stern. The Jews used every effort to defeat his object, and Colonel Sheil, a Roman Catholic, who was then British Envoy at the Court of Persia, gave to these conspirators his countenance, and exhibited the most unfriendly spirit towards Protestants and Protestant Missions. Elijahu, when about to sail for Bagdad, was seized by the



police agents, and it was only the influence and exertions of Captain Kemball, then Assistant British Resident at Bushire, which secured his release, and enabled him to proceed to Bagdad. There, after a stay of three months, and further instruction in the truths of Christianity, he was baptized, and returned to his native place ; where, his consistent walk, and Christian life, reconciled him to his family, and removed many of the prejudices of his Jewish acquaintances.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

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### THE PERSIAN GULF.

The sequel of this history will show, how, in his life and practice, Mr. Stern walked in the steps of the Apostle Paul. To proclaim the Gospel to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" was the central object of his efforts; but "the Gentiles" also heard "the Word" by his mouth and "believed." With the ardour and faithfulness of a true servant of God, he ever remembered, that the breadth of the command was, to "preach the Gospel to every creature." These great principles were ever present to his mind, and were realized in practice, when navigating the Persian Gulf, and visiting the "mingled" people who inhabit those coasts. In the spring of 1848, Mr. Stern had the opportunity of taking a cruize in "the Clive," under Commodore G. C. Hawkins, who commanded the squadron of the East India Company. "The Clive" pursued her course from one station to another, visiting, among other places, the island of *Bahrein*. The capital of the island is *Manuma*. Here, he passed a most interesting time in conversation with Jewish merchants, whose opposition seemed gradually to yield to their better convictions, and who listened with pleasure to the message of salvation. One, even declined to receive some remuneration to which he was entitled, with the plea, that the Jews themselves were under an obligation to Mr. Stern, for the Gospel which he had proclaimed to them. At *Maharaz* his knowledge of Arabic gave him access to the Moslem Sheiks. With readiness they terminated their diplomatic discussions with the English representatives, in order that they might hear from the Missionary the reason of the faith which was in him. It was his part to correct their misapprehensions, as well as to unfold to them the truth. The result of these interviews was an earnest desire on the part of the principal Sheik to possess

an Arabic Bible. Mr. Stern promised that a copy should be sent to him by "the Clive" on her next cruise. It was almost touching, to hear the Sheik at one time, adjuring the Missionary not to forget his promise; and at another time, entreating the Commodore, not to forget to bring the much-coveted "Torah and Angeel." It was a satisfaction to know, that both these promises were faithfully performed.

Wherever "the Clive" went, Mr. Stern sought for information concerning the Jews, on whose behalf he had been sent. As the ship cruized about the Persian Gulf, the mountains of Arabia attracted his notice, and he learnt that in the heart of that country, now so seldom traversed, and of which so little is known, considerable numbers of Jews resided. When, he was moreover informed, that they lived among the most despotic and fanatical Moslems, and that they were subject to grievous hardships, his heart was moved with a desire to unfold to them the hopes and consolations of the Gospel. His informants gave him no reason to believe that such a design would be practicable, but they rather affirmed, that it would be accompanied by much danger. Yet, amongst those mountains and valleys, this undaunted messenger of the "glad tidings" would eventually find his way. The events of that journey are still to be recounted; forming as they did, the most dangerous and adventurous undertaking, in which he was ever engaged.

Divine service was regularly performed on board "the Clive" during these voyages, nor was any suitable opportunity lost of ministering to the crew. It was sometimes most impressive to see the deep emotions of some of the seamen, when, to an assemblage of about 150 officers and men, many of whom had passed years of life in carelessness and sin, the Missionary reasoned of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Extracts from the letters of two of the crew will show the effect produced upon their minds and consciences:—

"By the infinite mercy of God, you have been directed to this ship, to speak the glorious truths of the Gospel to a number of men who greatly need it, in order to induce them to leave the service of sin and Satan, and seek refuge under the glorious banner of the Cross. O how your words sank into our hearts this morning! God

grant that the impression may never be weakened ! We, sir, have been those bold blasphemers to whom you addressed those words of peace and hope ; we have committed iniquities and crimes too horrible to relate. O do not think it presumptuous thus to write, for to whom can we go more appropriately than to a holy minister of Christ, sent by Providence in our road, to guide and direct us ? Will you, reverend sir, oblige us with a copy of the sermon you preached this morning ? Although we remember the greater part of it, yet some words may have escaped us ; and this day, with God's blessing, will not be forgotten by many of us. O sir, I felt for some of my shipmates, who avowedly came to have something afterwards to scoff at and ridicule ; but their attention was arrested, and I hope that they will seek for mercy, as myself and companions have been led to do."

The second letter contains this passage :—

"Thanks, ten thousand thanks, for your kindness to me and my beloved companions, who are now on shore, myself being the only one of them on board. Sir, the enclosed letter, a copy of which I shall forward to the Archdeacon Jeffries, in Bombay (who often exhorted us to repent), will show you how horrible our former conduct has been, and how anxious we are now to walk with Christ and his people. Your words, dear Sir, have sunk into my heart ; for I assure you, that, if you had been three years ship-mate with us, you could not have spoken to us more feelingly ; you seemed to all of us to have been acquainted with our sinful lives, and to have always addressed people like myself and shipmates."

The feelings of the officers and seamen of the ship, were expressed some months after this cruize, in a substantial and handsome manner. A silver inkstand and silver pocket communion service were sent to Mr. Stern. The inkstand bore the following inscription :—

PRESENTED  
TO  
THE REV. HENRY STERN,  
BY  
COMMODORE HAWKINS,  
AND THE OFFICERS AND SEAMEN OF THE SQUADRON OF THE INDIAN  
NAVY, STATIONED IN THE GULF OF PERSIA,  
IN APRIL, 1848,  
AS A SMALL TOKEN OF THEIR SENSE OF HIS ZEAL AND ABILITY  
IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS SACRED FUNCTIONS,  
AND OF THEIR  
GREAT PERSONAL ESTEEM FOR HIS  
PRIVATE CHARACTER.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### MISSIONARY JOURNEYS IN PERSIA.

Mr. Stern started from the borders of the Persian Gulf at the beginning of 1847, for a prolonged tour through the cities of the Persian kingdom. A journey through these regions is always a matter of discomfort and difficulty, especially, when economy must be studied as to the mode of transit. The way-farer traverses mountains covered with snow, and swept by the winter blast, and wends his way oftentimes by narrow and dangerous tracks. Beneath, in the plains, the climate ranges from the balmy atmosphere of an European autumn, to the heat of the torrid zone. These trials have no equivalent in the conduct and character of the people. Plunged in debauchery and the lowest form of sensual pleasures; living when they are in power by rapine and oppression, and when they are powerless, eking out existence, for the most part, either by fraud, or by the most debasing occupations—the scenes which present themselves to the eye of the traveller are heart-rending and offensive. The forms of worship are various. The followers of Zoroaster are numerous, but the Moslems are in general the predominant race; and the tyranny of their rule is felt keenly by all who excite their avarice, or are the objects of their malice. Amongst the sufferers, none feel so bitterly the yoke of oppression as the sons and daughters of Abraham. Their lives and property are never secure from the greedy eye, or persecuting spirit of their rulers; and the meanest of the rabble look upon them as the offscouring of all things, on whom they can outpour their venom, without the fear of revenge. To wander month after month amidst such scenes as these—to witness the anguish and tears of those who are “still beloved for

the fathers' sakes,"—and to know that the oppressed are oftentimes led into crime and debasing sin, through the very force of the unhappy circumstances which surround them—must be an unspeakable trial to the servant of God.

It is "out of the depths" that the cry to the Lord God of Sabaoth is frequently heard. The voice of sympathy, and the ministry of reconciliation, appeal with irresistible power to the suffering spirit, and the awakened soul. The evidence that such effects were being produced by the Spirit of God, brought peace and relief to our Missionary traveller. All that he heard and saw in these dark and sin-stricken regions, convinced him that even there, the Lord had a seed to serve Him. There were some, whose anxiety and hungering after divine truth, bore witness to that "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," which was full of encouragement. He had the assurance, that although he was now sowing "in tears," he should reap "in joy." It was not merely with a prophetic eye, but amidst the facts and circumstances which harmonized with his own past and painful experience, that he expressed his confidence, that some parts of these desolate wastes would, ere long, become as "the garden of the Lord." It will be seen in the condensed narrative which the following pages contain, that in several cases, no other agency was employed by God in effecting the spiritual deliverance of some who had long been the captives of Satan and of sin. In some instances, others were to reap where he had sown, and to enter upon fields of labour, in which he had been the first to plough, and to sow the seeds of eternal life.

It often happens, that the most encouraging prospects, are followed by the most grievous disappointments. Mr. Stern's first experience and observations of the state of the Jews in Persia, convinced him that it was a field fruitful in promise. We find him afterwards submitting to the Committee of the London Society, a plan for the occupation of the city of Ispahan as a central Mission. To this proposal the Committee agreed, and the sequel will sufficiently explain, why the plan was eventually abandoned. Apart from every other impediment, it was found, that the Missionary was not likely to receive any protection from the Representative of Great Britain, who resided at *Teheran*. Colonel Shiel was a Roman Catholic.

It is unnecessary to enquire how far the influence of the Jesuits, constrained the British Envoy to act in opposition to the Protestant Missionary. It was soon evident, that, as far as he was concerned, no step would be taken to preserve Mr. Stern's life or property; and that no appeal against any suffering or indignity, to which he might be exposed, would meet with the slightest response. The political considerations which affect diplomatic appointments, in various parts of the world, are too often, as prejudicial to British interests, as they are unfavourable to those who have a claim on British protection.

The route from the Persian Gulf passed through *Kanzeroon*. The approach to this town, and the intercourse which Mr. Stern had with the Jews, is thus described:—

“On emerging from this fine verdant vale, we entered a rugged defile, difficult and dangerous to traverse both for man and beast. Our heavily burthened mules, however, accomplished with great confidence and care this wearisome task. We passed several *Rah-darees*, or toll-houses, where guards are stationed to keep the road free from marauding hordes, and to levy tolls on merchandize; but, unfortunately, they perform only the latter part of their duty, and whilst they subject every load to a certain impost, they expose at the same time the goods of the merchant to the rapacious grasp of the robber and freebooter. Our own caravan, till we came in sight of *Kanzeroon*, was full of fear and apprehension, and every one had provided himself with some missile weapons to repel the daring gangs who infest the country, and make it exceedingly unsafe for caravans; happily, as the *Rahdars* informed us, the robbers had some better game to chase elsewhere, and so we escaped without any personal encounter. We reached *Kanzeroon* at five o'clock, and without making any particular inquiries about lodgings, we entered the first hovel where we found an empty corner, and there, contented with a little milk for dinner, laid down near some smoking cinders, and enjoyed a repose which many a less exhausted frame might have envied. Sleep, “tired nature's calm restorer,” revived us again; and our first care on rising from our carpets was to get our abode a little swept, cleansed and humanized; after this we sent to the mullah of the Jews, and informed him of our intention to visit his people. The worthy rabbi, an old decrepid man, no doubt anticipated that we were rich travellers, and wanted to purchase antiques, for he and some of his friends forestalled us, and followed close at the heels of our servant. Their salaam was most cringing and humiliating, and when we addressed them in Hebrew, and invited them to be seated on our carpets, they appeared almost in doubt whether their ears did not deceive them. The mullah, who



was not far from threescore and ten, and totally blind, in an ecstasy of joy exclaimed, 'Welcome, welcome, ye children of the covenant and heirs of the promise; welcome in the land of the Medes and the Persians, ye travellers from far countries, and messengers of joy to the captives of Zion, whose hearts are throbbing with fear in a strange land, and among a cruel people.' Here the afflicted rabbi burst into tears, which, partially sincere and partially feigned, still affected us, and we endeavoured to console them by directing their minds from their suffering condition on earth to the peaceful abode of the believer in heaven. The words of comfort were like balm to their wounded and lacerated hearts, and they listened with intense interest to all we told them. The venerable grey-bearded rabbi was evidently struck by the numerous prophecies from which we proved the veracity of our belief, and with his sightless balls turned to heaven, he exclaimed from the depth of his heart, 'O thou, who in mercy hast loaded my declining years with sorrows and woes, reveal to this heart those saving truths which my blind eyes can now no longer examine or investigate.'"

Mr. Stern's arrival at *Sheeraz* occasioned considerable excitement. The Persians of this city are among the most unscrupulous adherents of the Arabian prophet. It has often been the scene, both before and since Mr. Stern's visit, of persecution against those who endeavoured to preach, and circulate the Word of God. Notwithstanding this, our Missionary was greatly impressed by the attention with which the Moslems, as well as the Jews, listened to his message. It was an evidence that his words were "with power." The manner in which he spoke of the work of some, whose writings and labours had preceded his own, sufficiently indicates, how anxious he was, that honour should be given to those to whom honour was due.

"We had a good many Jewish and Mahomedan visitors; amongst the latter was the treasurer of the governor,—a cunning, deceitful Persian, who was so liberal and profuse with his services, that his obsequiousness filled me with an irresistible repugnance, and made me loathe his society. He was accompanied by the British agent, a base, contemptible drunkard. The object of their visit was to get some brandy, but, unfortunately, when they had exhausted a whole volume of interested flatteries, and eulogized our piety, goodness, and devotion, we could only repeat what we had already stated, that we carried no such beverage with us. They were greatly annoyed at this repeated refusal, and with the boldness and impudence of devoted debauchees, went to our boxes, opened the covers, and examined whether they contained the brutalizing liquor; they were keenly disappointed when they found that we had not deceived them, and with the most imperturbable nonchalance sat down again

to discuss the reason of our disgust for this wretched propensity. Happily, upwards of twenty Jews entered our room at this moment, or else this audacious conduct might have led to some severe animadversion. Our new visitors, with their sad and pensive looks, offered a strong contrast to the bold and artful treasurer, and the arrogant, bloated *meerza*. We begged them to sit down, but the presence of the two worthies made them timid and uneasy; unhappy people, to be thus condemned to fear and trembling, without any rational hope that under the sway of Islamism their position will ever improve. When our Mahomedan visitors were gone, the Jews seemed to breathe a different atmosphere, and their conversation, which had been flurried and constrained, became free and easy. They asked many questions about the doctrines of Christianity, which we endeavoured to answer. They were particularly struck to find, that the great and vital truths of the Gospel were all contained in Moses and the Prophets. Some of the mullahs urged the non-fulfilment of the many prophetic promises, as an argument against our belief in the Messiahship of our Lord; 'If Jesus is indeed the Redeemer,' they said, 'and we cannot controvert your assertions, which are all founded on the inspired volume, then tell us why are the chains of our bondage still rivetted upon us, and why are the gates of our captivity still closed?' We referred them to those passages which point out the conditions of their deliverance, and the means of their emancipation; with deep emotions and agitated feelings they acquiesced in all we said, and I hope that in many hearts our words will have an abiding place, and produce the hallowed and glorious fruits of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The multitudes of Jews who daily crowded our house attracted the notice and curiosity of the Mahomedans, and the doctrines of our religion began to be the general topic of the day; even children in the streets pointed at us, and made their remarks on our avowed object. Many Mahomedans called upon us for New Testaments, to whom we invariably explained the essential doctrines of our religion, and with few exceptions we were always listened to with the greatest patience and interest. Amongst others, we also formed the acquaintance of several illuminati, professed seekers after truth. They were very liberal and tolerant in their views, and spoke with reverence and respect of Christ and his followers. Some had read the work entitled 'The Balance of Truth,' by the Rev. C. G. Pfander, a German missionary, and very much admired the spirit, tone, and style of this excellent controversial pamphlet. Our intercourse with these adherents of the Koran, has convinced me, that an intelligent, pious, and prudent missionary might do incalculable good amongst the Mussulmans of Persia; his work would of course be entirely preparatory, and would frequently test his faith and patience. But I have not the least doubt, although many withered hopes and disappointed expectations may attend his efforts, yet, if he perseveres, the happy influence of social and religious intercourse will ultimately mitigate

bigotry, soften prejudice, and remove many of the obstacles which at present impede the successful introduction of the Gospel into this sinful and polluted country. Hitherto, very few attempts have been made to bring the Persians to a knowledge of the truth; an erroneous notion, that they are a difficult and inaccessible people, has closed the gates of compassion and benevolence against them, and led multitudes to neglect one of the most intelligent and influential Moslem tribes in Central Asia. It is true several pious and learned missionaries have felt a deep interest in, and laboured with zeal and devotion for these long-degraded millions, but, unfortunately, their patrons and supporters proposed plans which it was impossible to adopt and impossible to carry into effect; the consequence was, that the missionaries were obliged to abandon a field where they had great encouragements to persevere. But while we lament the failures which attended the missions amongst the believers in the Koran, we are bound to inquire why was the tide of mercy not turned in favour of the Jews, who might have rewarded the husbandmen with an abundant crop, and proved the best channel to dispel with the torch of truth the long night of Moslem darkness, superstition, and ignorance. From our own reception amongst them, in every part of that extensive land, I am quite convinced that the field is ripening for the harvest, and had I only enjoyed a nominal protection which the Protestant representatives of Great Britain always kindly extended to the unoffending missionary, the land of my prayers and trials would at present be my home, and the scene of my labours and usefulness.

“At the request of almost all, we continually visited the synagogues, and invariably met with a kind and cordial reception; the mullahs themselves, with the greatest urbanity, usually offered us seats on the oratory; and without any demonstration and bigotry, or hostility against our creed, allowed us for hours together to address publicly their respective congregations. Such sermons excited many discussions among the Jews, and caused a great demand for Bibles and Gospels. Even the women, whose ignorance is most deplorable, manifested great interest in our message, and readily offered, in the absence of money, old coins, valueless ornaments, and even cooking utensils in barter for our books; a great spirit of inquiry was awakened in that celebrated town, where this miserable remnant of a forlorn race have for so many ages been groaning under the iron yoke of Mahomedanism. What amount of good we effected, and how many we persuaded to be almost, or altogether Christians, the day of judgment will alone disclose. Numbers of those who heard us, professed their conviction, and belief in the truth of Christianity; and though no one seceded openly from the synagogue, and avowed himself a disciple of Jesus,—we must remember the extremities to which such a step would expose the convert, and what cruel punishment, either judicial, or that which an infuriated mob might inflict upon a despised Jew, who has the temerity to prefer the Gospel of Christ to the Koran of Mahomed.

“The Sheerazees have always been considered the most accessible and liberal Persians ; that narrow bigotry, fiery enthusiasm, and blind superstition, which characterizes the middle and lower classes of the Shee sect, is not exhibited ; still there is the cruel, haughty, murderous, and revengeful spirit of the martial prophet ; and many who abuse Mahomed, and deride his pretended revelation, will draw their daggers, and unsheath their swords, to force an inoffensive Jew to pay allegiance to the Arabian lawgiver. Many hundreds of Israelites, in order to save themselves from a violent death, constantly renounce the religion of their fathers. All the silk merchants in the bazaar Vekeel, the most extensive market, are proselytes ; and their descendants, out of fear, strictly conform to all the rites of their new belief. I conversed with many of them ; in the beginning, they were very distant and reserved, but when we became more intimately acquainted, they laid aside their assumed restraint, and confessed their belief in Moses and the Prophets, and their contempt and abhorrence for everything connected with their adopted creed.”

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## CHAPTER X.

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### PERSEPOLIS, JULFA, AND ISPAHAN.

After leaving Sheeraz, the route to Ispahan lay by the ruins of *Persepolis*. The Buad-Emir was passed, being the Araxes of ancient history. Over these plains and mountains, the Medes and Parthians once held dominion; and here, the armies of Alexander the Great gained some of their greatest victories.

“The ruins of Persepolis, which appeared, at the extremity of the plain, as if they were rising out of the bowels of the grey rugged rocks, at whose sloping base they are situated, even at a distance of ten miles, looking grand and imposing, rolling back the mind on the stream of time to centuries long since past, and to ages whose history is enveloped in darkness and uncertainty.

“On approaching from the plain, as we did, with the slanting beams of a winter sun shining on the frowning ruins, where one of the greatest monarchs the world ever knew once held his court; and another, no less celebrated, indulged in his delirious and giddy bacchanals, the place, even in its present desolate condition, has an imposing and bewildering appearance, and confirms the fame which Scripture and ancient history have deservedly conferred on the greatest and wisest monarch of antiquity. This pleasing melancholy is not diminished, after ascending the double flight of steps which conduct to the landing place, for here, again, the numerous marble halls, and the countless bass-relief sculptures, excite the feelings, and make one linger with delight on a spot where every image reminds us of generations long since forgotten, and of heroes whose names only live on the page of history. The platform, which is raised fifty feet from the plain, occupies an area of about fifteen thousand feet long, and nine hundred broad; it is ascended by a double marble staircase, the steps of which are so low and gentle, that without any difficulty the best Arab horse will ride up and down with ease. On reaching the landing place, two colossal bulls,



whose heads, no doubt, fell under the scimitars of the ruthless Saracens, form the portals;—fit emblems to guard the sacred precincts of the palace of the great king. A second portal, watched by similar sentinels, with the exception that they have human heads and gigantic wings, conducts into a spacious court, where a cistern, once replenished by subterraneous aqueducts, diffused coolness, and now only increases the yearning of the feverish lips for the refreshing draught. This court leads to a second terrace, where the majestic grandeur of this smitten elegance is most conspicuous; whole colonnades of magnificent columns lie hidden under their own mouldered remains; others, half concealed from sight, disclose the finest workmanship of the Grecian and Egyptian chisel; and the few still standing mockingly display the wonder, beauty, and splendour of this scene. From these pillars, which, in sad grandeur, stand conspicuous amongst their fallen companions, awaiting the same withering stroke, the eye wanders over countless hieroglyphic representations, which adorn the staircase, and ornament all the walls, till the mind is exhausted and fatigued with the vast variety of this mighty mansion, which has defied the rude assaults of numerous hostile armies, and still continues, even in its present desolation, an object of wonder and admiration. Immediately behind the ruins of this gorgeous palace are two sepulchral vaults, cut in the solid rock, and elaborately sculptured in the front; the most conspicuous person being the Archemagus, or high-priest, with his hands extended towards a blazing altar, and the symbol of the guardian spirit hovering over the intervening space. These sepulchral grotts, concealed under lofty perpendicular cliffs, as if to outlive the decay of worlds, even these have not remained unscathed by the lapse of time and the ferocity of man; the lower part of one is entirely covered by the accumulation of rubbish, and the debris of the mouldering rock; and the other has been forcibly broken open and abused, for the vile purpose of a stable, by the rude and uncivilized migratory tribes of Fars, who encamp near this former abode of royalty, during the winter season. We remained a whole day amongst these interesting objects of attraction; and then, through the dark, untenanted, marble courts (where lie many hundreds of sculptured figures, which only want life to relate the wonderful occurrences which have transpired in these ruined, mutilated, and silent halls), we retraced our steps to the principal staircase, and returned to our munzil, at Futenbad."

The following passages convey to the reader a vivid impression of the lamentable condition of the people among whom the Missionary was called for a time to sojourn. The causes which underlie the degradation of the Jews are clearly and simply given:—

"Our wearisome night journey (from Soormuk) terminated at ten a.m., at the village Aminabad, where we found a hospitable shelter in a decaying caravanserai. In the afternoon, half-a-dozen of

*rahdars* came to our cell, to extort an impost upon our luggage. We were convinced of the injustice of their demand, and so, with sullen indifference, resisted their claim. The chief of the party, tired with his unsatisfactory negotiation, became quite violent and intemperate, and invoked the most awful imprecations on himself, if he allowed us to leave. We listened to all his threats and menaces with the greatest unconcern, which made every vein in his face throb and swell with fury; however, when this ebullition of savage rage had cooled down, he returned to our lodging, and, in a subdued tone of voice, said, "I will not insist upon the impost, but you must give me a bottle of arrack, to make some *keif* (pleasure) on your account. We told him that we carried no such beverage with us, and even if we had any, would not be accessary to his breaking the prophet's law. The disappointed rahdar swore by Ali, and all the 124,000 Mahomedan prophets, that sherab and arrack were only interdicted to those who prayed; but, as he never prayed, he could not be included in the law. His philosophy and logic proved of no avail, and the worthy tax-gatherer left with contempt, the niggardly, unsocial, and temperate Franks.

"When we arrived in *Julfa*, we frequently expressed our indignation at the public profanation of the Lord's-day; the whole week the streets looked empty and deserted, but on the Sabbath all was bustle and activity,—bishops, priests, and people, indiscriminately hastened to the market to make purchases, and to dispose of their goods. We spoke against this wicked practice to those with whom we came into contact. Meerza Daood, an opulent and influential Georgian merchant, approved of our remonstrance, and, backed by the authority of his uncle, Mehtummed-ad-Doulah, the governor of Ispahan, he transferred the market-day from the Christian to the Jewish Sabbath. The Archbishop gave his consent and approbation to this arrangement, and for several Sundays Mahomedan policemen were stationed at the gates, to prevent Christians from profaning and desecrating their own Sabbath. For a few weeks the market was not so well attended as usual, and the convent to which the place belongs sustained a trifling loss of a few shillings per month; the Archbishop took umbrage at this, and the original custom was restored."

Speaking of the Jewish inhabitants, Mr. Stern observed:—

"The hopeless condition of this oppressed and ill-treated people is aggravated by the dark and cheerless prospects which loom in their future. Hated, despoiled, and deprived of every chance whereby to earn his daily bread, the poor Jew—whose person many consider morally defiled, and whose very touch all believe communicates contamination—is compelled to have recourse to the most degrading pursuits, to gain a precarious existence. Many, consequently, lead a gipsy life, and by fraud and fortune-telling alleviate the wants of nature; others support themselves by cheating and



peddling ; and the rest pamper the corrupt appetites of the *zootees*, and sell arrack, wine, and other inebriating, and not unfrequently poisonous draughts. These miserable occupations, which must engender the worst principles and stifle every moral sentiment, are not selected by the Jew optionally, but he is driven by his oppressors into the worst vices, and compelled to become a most arrant and skilful cheat. Many times have I spoken to individuals and congregations on this subject, and the reply was, "What are we to do? Shall we suffer our wives and helpless children to starve before our eyes, or shall we sell our sons to Moloch (Islamism), and our daughters to those who devour us?" Yet, notwithstanding these dishonest and fraudulent pursuits, to which slavery and intolerance condemn him, the Jew, with all his pilfering and cheating, is scrupulous and punctilious in the observance of his religious duties, and yearning with solicitude for the advent of the Redeemer. I have frequently seen an Israelite, after having been maltreated by some Moslems, sitting down on the ground, exclaiming, with a tone in which hatred and sorrow were keenly blended; "Art thou not He that brought us from Egypt, out of the land of our captivity; and wilt thou not speedily send us the Messiah, and revenge our wrongs, and redeem us out of the hands of these profane dogs, the enemies of our holy law?"

*Ispahan* was the scene of much which was encouraging, and much which perplexed. The Governor at that time was Mehtummed-ad-Doulah. He was a Georgian by birth, and one of the best rulers in Persia. Had he lived, Mr. Stern might have enjoyed a protection and support, which might have enabled him to establish a Mission at *Ispahan*, on a firm and lasting basis. So fair was the prospect, that he submitted to the London Committee, as already mentioned, the expediency of making that city the centre of Missionary operations in Persia. This course was adopted by the Committee. A few months after Mr. Stern's return to Bagdad from his first visit to Persia, he started again for *Ispahan*, in the depth of winter, with the expectation of carrying out this plan. But soon after his arrival in 1848, his friend and patron died, and with his death ceased all his cherished hopes, of the protection which he needed, in order to work successfully among the people. The following passages will serve to show the contrast between the conduct of the Moslem Governor and that of the British Representative. The Mehtummed had invited Mr. Stern to see him:—

"He was seated in a little room, looking out upon a lovely, fragrant flower garden. Upon our entrance he immediately rose,

and with a peremptory command ordering every one except his mullah to withdraw, welcomed us with great affability to his palace, and the city of Ispahan. After tea, coffee, and pipes, the conversation turned upon the object of our travels, and the success we had met with. Having answered these few interrogations, his Excellency asked us what were our opinions and views of Mohamed and the Koran? Who was referred to in Deuteronomy xviii. 15? Whom had Moses in view when he said, "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them?" (Deut. xxxiii. 2). What was the meaning of a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels, described in Isaiah xxi. 6, 7? And many other similar questions, of much research and ingenuity, which we answered according to our own views. He expressed himself much interested in our labours, and assured us that if the Jews embraced Christianity, he would take them under his special protection, and allow no one to molest or persecute them.

"A few days after this interview, we received several invitations to come to the palace, as the Mehtummed had summoned the Jewish mullahs to confer with us in his presence, on the subject of the Messiah. Accompanied by our friend, the physician, we went to the official residence of his Excellency, where we were received with the greatest condescension and politeness. His Excellency himself opened the conference by a short address, in which he explained the object of our friendly meeting, and the beneficial effects which might accrue from a careful investigation of the important subject of religion; he told the Jews that he sympathized with their deplorable position, of which, before our arrival, he was ignorant, and promised to take all their complaints under consideration at some future period. The conference lasted upwards of two hours, and though the Jews were guarded in their expressions, and glossed over their own religious sentiments, in order to please the Mehtummed and his two friends, the only Mahommedans allowed to be present, still from their replies much was elicited to convince his Excellency that Christianity was the religion of Moses and the Prophets, and the only system which met the contingencies of our corrupt nature. We presented the Governor and his friends with Arabic Bibles, and after a sumptuous breakfast in the palace, asked leave to depart, and returned to Julfa, grateful to our Heavenly Father for having inclined the heart of the greatest man in the country in our favour.

"In Peresba, a small village of infamous notoriety, where, with our servants, I had gone in advance to secure a place in the caravanserai, we were attacked by a party of robbers, headed by the chief of the place, and having neither money nor other articles of value with me to satisfy the cupidity of these ruffians, I was wantonly maltreated, and left bleeding and wounded in the court of the

traveller's home. On a subsequent occasion, when I visited the capital on matters of business connected with our mission, I lodged a complaint against the party who had been guilty of this outrageous assault, with Her Britannic Majesty's minister at the court of Persia; who listened with much excitement and indignation to my statement, but suddenly recollecting that I was a Protestant, and not, as he may have heard from his friends the Romish priests in Julfa, favourably disposed to Popery, with great severity said: 'I cannot afford you any redress, as you have no legal claim to British protection.' It was in vain to urge that there was no other European representative, except the Russian, to whom I could apply; I was a Protestant, and as such undeserving of such treatment. How kind, generous and noble does the conduct of the Mehtummed appear in contrast with that of the British representative!

"The savage passions of the *zoots*, which, during the Mehtummed's rule, had been forcibly suppressed by the glittering knife of the executioners, like an irresistible torrent, broke forth and spread terror and confusion through every quarter of this extensive town. The Jews and Armenians, who seldom escape unscathed in any popular commotions, were, owing to the few favours which they enjoyed during the life-time of the late governor, the particular objects of the malice and hatred of these unprincipled ruffians, and many a cruel deed was perpetrated among these silent and patient sufferers. The Armenians had still an advantage over the Jews, for their suburb being isolated, and the principal streets defended by gates, they could defy the heterogeneous mass of which the Ispahan rabble is composed; but not so the Jews, domiciled in the worst part of the town, and surrounded by all the refuse and off-scouring of the populace, with their spirits broken and their hearts desponding, they submissively endured all the dire misery which cupidity, bigotry and lawlessness could inflict. Our own position during this wild turmoil was very critical; the Ketkhoda of Julfa sent us a friendly message that we should not frequent the town, nor even venture unnecessarily in the streets of Julfa, as he could not, in the mutinous state of the place, afford us any assistance in case of emergency. We were, however, not intimidated by this, or other kind warnings, as we knew Europeans were too much dreaded in Persia, even by the worst characters, to offer any other violence to their persons beyond a harmless hissing and pelting with invulnerable missiles, such as rotten apples and orange peel, to which experience had made us quite impervious. We therefore, in dependence on Him who had been with us in so many troubles, continued our work; and an extract or two from my journal will show, that we had a wide, interesting and promising field of labour before us."

It will be thus seen that the threats, dangers, and inconveniences which met Mr. Stern on every side, did not deter him from pursuing

the great object of his mission. For about a year he continued his labours, notwithstanding the hindrances which were placed in his way by the many antagonists to the Gospel of Christ. The interest taken in his ministry was not confined to any particular class of Jews. The priests and mullahs,—the most learned and honourable among them,—sought every opportunity of intercourse with him.

“On the Feast of Purim, the Jewish mullahs came to Julfa to see us. We were quite astonished to see a company of grey-haired venerable men, exposing themselves to the insults of an unrestrained fanatical mob, in order to have some conversation with Christian missionaries.

“Mullah Jacob, a perfectly blind man, said: ‘I have been falling more than ten times on my way to Julfa, and yet, though I cannot see you, I do not regret the trouble of having come to you.’

“*We*.—‘And we hope your visit will be beneficial to you.’

“*Blind Mullah*.—‘The Lord has laid upon me three great afflictions, viz., poverty, blindness, and old age.’

“*We*.—‘Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth; and although He conceals from your sightless eyes the wonderful works of His creation, yet we trust He has not hidden from your mental vision the glorious plan of redeeming mercy, but that the light of His Spirit has shone into your heart, and revealed to your immortal soul that great light, which, whosoever followeth, shall not walk in darkness.’

“The conversation now became general, and the mullahs, though they made some slight objections to several important truths which we brought before them, yielded to many essential differences. They allowed that Jesus must have been the Messiah; acknowledged the need of an all-sufficient sacrifice, and admitted the necessity of an Almighty Saviour. We replied, ‘If you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, confess that we can only be redeemed through the merits of His blood, and saved by faith in His name. Why, if you are sincere in your profession, do you not come boldly forward and cry, ‘We have found the Messiah of whom Moses, the Prophets, and Apostles do testify?’

“They seemed confused, and hardly knew what reply to make. Mullah Elijah, after a pause, affirmed that they read daily in the New Testament. We told him that the reading alone was not sufficient, nor would it be of any avail in the day of judgment. ‘What then must we do?’ ‘The New Testament answers your question, when it tells you to believe, and be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’

“Mullah Solomon most seriously answered, ‘We baptized each other when we were in the bath last Friday.’ We showed them the guilt of this dissimulation and hypocrisy, and admonished them not

to trifle with such a momentous subject, since their eternal well-being was pending on the issue. These poor straying sheep really deserve our prayers and intercessions at the throne of grace. Some glimmering of Divine light has indeed broken in upon their long night; but, alas! their hearts have so much vegetated in sin and vice, and luxuriated in every evil passion, that they have become callous in, and indifferent to, everything that cannot be rendered subservient to their temporal interests, and the bent of their corrupt nature. In our intercourse with these masters in Israel, we, however, frequently met with pleasing instances, which proved that our labour had not been in vain, nor our strength spent for nought; thus Mullah Eliyahu, the oldest rabbi, with whom we had some conversation on topics of great import, said, 'I can assure you that I am in the greatest strait, I know not what to do, for to believe that Christ was the Son of God is incompatible with my feeble understanding, and to argue with you about the orthodoxy of our faith is also quite impossible.' We advised him to pray for the illumination of the Spirit, who was the only sure guide to life and eternal happiness. On another occasion, we had a long discussion with the Chief Rabbi; the old man, with a dejected countenance and depressed spirits, sat quiet and calm, listening with undivided attention to all we said; but when we spoke to him of his advanced age, and reminded him of his nearness to eternity, the necessity of a change of heart, and faith in the promised Redeemer, he started up, rushed between us, and, with tears streaming down his wan cheeks, entreated us not to urge this matter upon him.

"On another occasion, after a long sermon on the advent, atonement, and sacrifice of our Saviour, an individual in the assembly, who evidently disliked the onerous burthen of the rabbinical precepts and injunctions, got up and said, 'Your religion is very easy, it neither enjoins ceremonies, nor requires any particular sacrifice; ours, on the contrary, is fraught with so many commands that it occupies the whole life of a Jew to become thoroughly acquainted with all.' On being asked whether an unwearied performance of the whole Rabbinical code would curb the passions, sanctify the heart, and bring a man nearer to his God? he paused, looked round, and candidly replied 'No.' He was then told that Christianity refined the human breast, ennobled the dark mind, filled the soul with holy aspirations, and brought the fallen creature into close communion with his redeeming Lord. They all seemed quite astonished at these effects being attributed to the Gospel, and asked with much apparent sincerity and anxiety, whether rites and ceremonies were quite useless. Our reply was, 'If they are calculated to edify, they are expedient; and if not, they defeat their own object, and ought to be cancelled.' They confessed that there was much of sound argument in what we said, though they could not believe that the Gospel required such a thorough change of life and conduct as we stated. We read to them the account of our Lord's



intercourse with Nicodemus ; but they were as much astonished and surprised at the doctrine of regeneration, and a new birth, as the Pharisee of old. We gave them some tracts, and then took our leave."

This city, which was now revelling in vice, and which bore every possible trace of decay and ruin, must have been at one time distinguished for its magnificence. Abbas the Great, ruled with absolute sway over these lands, and during his reign, the empire must have risen to a state of unusual prosperity.

"The number of palaces, bazaars, gardens, and promenades, which have survived the ravages of the Afghans, is still prodigious ; and many, for beauty, splendour, and extent, would not be deemed unworthy to grace a fashionable town in Europe. The Chehar Baugh,—the public pleasure ground, where thousands of Ispahanees may be seen on a gala day, loitering among the beds of roses, narcissus, and other fragrant shrubs, singing love-songs and smoking *caleoons*,—is the most lovely and luxurious avenue the imagination can picture. It is, including a magnificent bridge of thirty-three arches, over the Zeinderood, about a mile long, and lined with four rows of stately chinar trees, planted in ages long since past. This spacious ground, nicely adjusted into equi-distant parterres, and watered by perpetually running canals, which fall from foaming cascades down into square and octagonal basins, comprises all that is attractive, exhilarating, and soothing to the feelings and tastes of an oriental. On the sides are the Hesht Behesht, or eight paradises, with their pleasure grounds and gay pavilions, which both diversify and add to the picturesque aspect of the sylvan scene.

"There are many other palaces, which, though deserted and uninhabited, still continue monuments of the elegance, luxury and wealth of the Sefi monarchs ; but the Chehel Sitoon, or forty pillars, which recall to mind the visionary tales of the ingenious mistress of Shahriar, excels all that fancy can conceive of oriental splendour, profusion and prodigality. This princely residence is at present untenanted. I visited it in spring, when the trees which surround it were covered with dense foliage, and the flowers with expanding buds. The entrance hall, which faces the garden, is one sparkling profusion of crystal and gilding ; I found my eyes quite dazzled by the glare which, under the noon-tide rays, reflected from the glass pillars, and richly mirrored walls. From this magnificent hall, I passed through a glass door into another grand and imposing saloon, where the great Abbas kept his midnight orgies, and received the ambassadors of conquered and allied nations ; it is an imposing, lofty, and spacious room, richly ornamented from the ceiling down to the floor, on which latter is still spread the costly carpet of the founder ; the walls are embellished with six large paintings, which display both the taste and elegance, as well as the intemperance

and licentiousness, of the Persian court at that period. Contiguous to the Chehel Sitoon, are several edifices of beauty and note ; but as there is such a great uniformity and sameness in all these structures, a description of each would scarcely be admissible."

Nor are the gifts of nature less prolific, than the ingenuity and power, of which these remarkable traces remain.

" With the Eid-e-Nawrooz, or the feast of the vernal equinox, a relic of the ancient creed, which bigotry could not suppress, nor fanaticism obliterate, commences the season of industry and diligence ; the weather is then delightful, and the teeming soil round Ispahan, celebrated for fertility, without any hard toil from the husbandman, becomes decked with the most lovely vegetation. The people, after their imprisonment for several months in the confined atmosphere of the harems, are so enchanted with the change, that they protract the feast for upwards of sixteen days ; during the whole of this time the inviting retreats of the Chehar Baugh, Hesht Behesht, Chehel Sitoon, &c., &c., are polluted by the greatest licentiousness, and most shameless debauchery."

The anxieties and hardships to which Mr. Stern had been exposed, seriously affected his health. In 1849, the Committee of the London Society agreed to a proposal, that he should return for a time, from Bagdad to England. From the times of the Apostles, it has been the hallowed custom, for those who have been sent forth into the Mission Field, to return to the centres of Christian effort, to recount to the Church, what the Lord had done through their instrumentality. Few changes could be more valuable to a toiling Missionary—few could be more advantageous to his work. It was an inexpressible joy to this faithful labourer, to be relieved of continued contact with unbelief and superstition, and to resume companionship with the people of God, in a country so favoured as our own. Such an occasion, moreover, is always important, presenting as it does, the opportunity for communicating personally the results of Mission work, to those who are wont to give it their sympathy and support. Mr. Stern's presence in England, and his advocacy of the cause in which he had gained so much experience, could not fail to stimulate the zeal and interest of the friends of Jewish Missions. That which contributed to the restoration of his health, was thus made useful to the work of the Society at home.

Our Missionary brother, received Deacon's Orders at Jerusalem, in 1844, and his sojourn in England afforded a favourable opportunity



for his admission into Priest's Orders. This took place on the 23rd of December, in the year of his return to England. The Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield) ordained him, in the Chapel Royal at Whitehall.

There are circumstances which sometimes render it expedient, that a Missionary should be untrammelled by domestic ties. But this is rarely the case. The presence and co-operation of a sympathizing wife, is of immense advantage to him in his work, apart from the personal happiness to which it largely contributes. Mr. Stern's presence in England, opened the way for the attainment of another important object in his life and history. On the 2nd of April, 1850, he was married to Miss Charlotte Elizabeth Purday, second daughter of Mr. Charles Henry Purday, then residing in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square. The ceremony was performed at St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, by the Rector, the Hon. and Rev. H. Montagu Villiers, afterwards Bishop of Durham. Mr. Villiers was amongst the most active and valuable members of the Committee of the London Society. He had watched with prayerful interest the labours and devotedness of the young Missionary, and he gladly accepted the proposal, that he should be the instrument of uniting him to one, who was in every respect fitted, to be to him a true helper in the Lord. Soon after his marriage, Mr. Stern returned to Bagdad with his bride, where they arrived on the 14th of June.

## CHAPTER XI.

### HAMADAN.

This chapter receives the above superscription. *Hamadan* (the ancient Ecbatana) is one of many towns and villages through which Mr. Stern travelled, in the course of a second Missionary journey in Persia. But it was hereafter to be associated with some events, which would serve to give it a conspicuous position in the annals of Missionary success. The "bread" which was here "cast upon the waters" would be "found after many days." It was not a transient, or passing excitement, which encouraged the assurance, that the spirit of God was moving in the hearts of the Jews, to whom Mr. Stern unfolded "the unsearchable riches of Christ." He saw enough to convince him, that Hamadan would ere long stretch out its hands unto God, and that a work of grace, which under the divine blessing, would be found to grow in depth and intensity, had begun in the hearts of some of those, who listened with eagerness to his ministry.

It was about this time, that I may be said to have had my first indirect introduction to this distinguished Missionary. The Rev. W. Ayerst, Secretary to the London Society, having accepted the Vicarage of Egerton, the Rev. B. W. Wright, who was at that time Chaplain at Trieste, was appointed to succeed him. In the unavoidable interval between Mr. Ayerst's resignation, and Mr. Wright's entrance on the duties of the office, it was necessary that the Annual Report of the Society should be prepared. This duty was committed to me, at the beginning of 1853; and among the materials which were placed in my hands, for that purpose, were the journals of Mr. Stern. Up to that time, I had had but little opportunity of reading any of these records, and I was greatly impressed with the evidences

which they gave, of a zeal, ability, and purpose of heart, much beyond that which may generally be found in such documents. My impressions were confirmed, when in subsequent years I met him face to face, and heard from his own lips the recital of his Missionary adventures. His journeys to Persia were the chief themes of those reports, and a light was thrown upon the condition and character of the Jews of those regions, which was altogether new to me.

It is almost unnecessary to recur to the difficulties which were placed in the way of Mr. Stern's work. Colonel Shiel, the British Envoy, at Teheran, read to him the instructions which he had received from the Foreign Office that "if any European whether lay or ecclesiastic, was in danger of life and property, the Envoy was to interfere and protect that person." Then, he coolly added; "I shall mention your case to Lord Palmerston by next post; but as he is not a church-goer, like Lord Aberdeen, who would have given you protection, as he did the American Missionaries at Oroomiah, I do not think that it will be of any avail." This was the Envoy's rejoinder to the recapitulation, of the insults, maltreatment and losses to which Mr. Stern had been exposed. On one occasion he related, that "had it not been for the guardian care of our Heavenly Father, who restrained the arm of the murderer, when his dagger was uplifted for the fell deed, the mortal remains of the writer, might long since have mingled with the soil which he had often sorrowfully trod."

Mr. Stern's final visit to *Hamadan* took place on the 7th of March, 1852. He thus described the town and its Jewish inhabitants:—

"According to the most accurate information I could obtain, this ancient city is at present inhabited by five hundred Jewish families. They reside in a particular quarter, and in case of public commotion, which generally exposes them to the lawless rapacity of the covetous, and the malevolent persecutions of the powerful, they close the gates of their Ghetto, and so enjoy a faint security till the storm has subsided. Their position is, however, at all times very sad and pitiable, and one cannot behold their sluggish and stooping motion, nor their abject, base, and sordid occupations, without being struck with the terrible fulfilment of the prophetic warning.

The following incident, affords a painful illustration of the relentless and wanton oppression to which the Jews are subject:—

“Early in the morning, the Jews crowded my little room in the caravanserai. Many of them had been reading the New Testament, and the questions they had to propound were numerous indeed. The mullah asked me why, since the Gospel commanded that Christ should be preached among all nations, they had been so long neglected by the followers of Jesus. I told him that the greater part of the world was still enveloped in darkness and sin, and gave them a short account of the conversion of several of their brethren in Europe; and the trials and difficulties, sufferings and persecutions, which many of these have had to endure, quite affected them, and they said to each other, ‘Surely this religion must be divine, or else such effects could not be produced.’ Our conversation was suddenly interrupted by loud shrieks and lamentations, accompanied by cries, ‘Chacham! oh, Chacham!’ I looked out of the door of my cell, and, to my horror, saw upwards of twenty Jews lashed over the court by the whips and clubs of about a dozen Mahomedans. I instantly rushed out, called for the gate-keeper, and told him that I held him responsible for the outrageous conduct of the ruffians, who thus wantonly maltreated poor and inoffensive individuals. He and the other Mahomedans were rather astonished at my interference in behalf of Jews, and, in a most impudent strain, assured me that if I took such sympathy in their sufferings, I might as well become a sharer in their punishments; and I believe the threat would have been executed, had not several Russian fishermen hastened to my relief. I would have brought the affair before the Governor, but my own unprotected position, the doubtful advocacy which two Russian merchants promised me, and the universal contempt and abhorrence in which Jews in this country are held, all conspired to mitigate my solicitude to obtain redress for these patient sufferers. Whilst I was thus engaged in defending the Jews in the court, their brethren in my cell remained perfectly tranquil, and when I asked them how they could, with such indifference, see their friends maltreated, their simple reply was, we are accustomed to these things.

“The avocations in which their industry endeavours to find the means of subsistence are very few, and oppressively restricted. Many are weavers of silk, workers in silver, tailors, and engravers, but the fanaticism of the mullahs grudges them even these humble trades, which, whilst they gain them sufficient to sustain life, make them at the same time feel all the worst pangs of poverty, want, and hopeless destitution. These inexorable and onerous restrictions, which the bigoted sectaries of Ali impose upon the Jew, have crushed his frame and debased his mind; and we must not feel surprised to witness among this people, who have so long submitted to every humiliation, and yielded to every taunt, mortification and insult, till their once susceptible hearts became impervious to ignominy and degradation, traces of the worst crimes and vices which, alas! taint the air of Persia, and pollute that smiling and fertile land.

"Often, very often indeed, has the missionary, in traversing these dark regions, reason to blush for his own species, and to wish himself far removed from a scene where the phases of human depravity are so repugnant and repulsive ; but shall these perishing multitudes sink into the grave without a kind voice to warn them of their danger? or a compassionate heart to point them to Jesus? No, our duty is to exhort, warn, and reprove ; and although the effects of the preached Gospel are not at once visible, a silent and benign influence is widely spreading, and we may take it for granted that He who has said, for our encouragement, ' In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that,' will fulfil his promise, and cause His truth to convert these dark places into vales of life, holiness and joy.

"Chacham Eliyahu, and many other Jews, gave me a most cordial welcome. I spent the greater part of my time in the mullah's house, and saw several individuals who had heard the preached Gospel, and had read the books I gave them, not without benefit to their souls. The greatest obstacle is, that those persons dare not, without exposing themselves to most violent persecutions, and perhaps even to death itself, avow their convictions of the truth. We must, however, not despair, for He who in mercy has caused His word to enter into the hearts of these perishing souls, will also smooth the way for their public profession of the crucified Saviour."

We have seen how the anxious interest which many of the Jews exhibited, in this town and neighbourhood, in the things which "accompany salvation," excited the most prayerful hopes of the Missionary traveller. At *Koshan* he wrote that "the mullah and two of his friends informed me that there was a small band of inquirers, consisting of twelve individuals, including several rabbis, who regularly assembled twice a week to read the Old and New Testament ; they have to combat much opposition, and to endure the railings and insults of their prejudiced co-religionists, who frequently apply to them the most opprobrious epithets ; but under all these disadvantages they persevere, and I hope that He who has awakened their consciences and affected their hearts, will continue the good work among them, and thus raise up in this heathen place a little community to the praise and glory of His holy name."

Of the sale and circulation of the Scriptures, it was his privilege to write in equally encouraging terms. "The demand for books was so great that, after I had disposed of my extensive stock, I had to write to my fellow-labourer, Mr. Sternschuss (at Bagdad), for a

fresh supply, and of these not a single volume remained in my possession." At Ispahán, and in other places, prolonged intercourse with him seemed to rivet the bonds of affection and confidence which had been formed between himself and his Jewish brethren. He was no longer regarded as "a stranger, and a preacher of new doctrines, but welcomed as a brother, and treated as a friend,—the house of the most respectable Jew was my home, and the synagogue, for hours every day, my place of preaching."

When the voice of the Missionary was no longer heard, warning and exhorting in the name of the Lord, the Spirit of God continued to water the divine seed, and to give it power and vitality. In 1875, the embers of truth, which had so long been smouldering and hidden from observation at Hamadan, burst into a flame; and a number of Jews, of whom one of wealth and learning, Hezekiel Hirin Elasar, was the leader, professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Their number increased, and some were baptized by American Missionaries, who occupy several stations in Persia. The sufferings through which these disciples of our Lord had to pass, could hardly have been exceeded. They were, by means of false charges, which the rapacious Moslem rulers were glad to confirm, under the influence of large bribes, imprisoned, beaten, and deprived of their property. One died from the effects of the injuries which he received. They held fast the profession of their faith, without wavering. In their distress, they appealed to the London Society, and urged, to use their own language, that they should be allowed "to live unmolested among our own people, and to draw them to Jesus Christ." The appeal was not made in vain. A settled Mission was established by the Society at Hamadan, and the seal given to the ministry and expectations of the great Missionary, whose work of faith, and labour of love, were thus found not to have been in vain in the Lord.



## CHAPTER XII.

### TEHERAN, MOSUL, AND NESTORIA.

The hardships and difficulties through which Mr. Stern necessarily passed, in the prosecution of his mission, were of a very trying nature. The approach to Hamadan, of which he gave a picturesque description, as well as that of other places, which he visited in the course of his Missionary wanderings, will serve to illustrate this point.

“At two o'clock in the night we again pursued our journey ; it was dark and stormy, and the clouds, in rapid confusion, chased each other over the lofty Elwand, whose towering summit concealed every other object from our view. The ascent up this steep mountain was dangerous and difficult, and both man and beast had to use the greatest care, in order not to sink into the drifted snow, which had filled up every glen and chasm ; or to roll in the ice-bound ravines, which, at every few steps, dissected these mighty ramparts of nature. After two hours' hard toil, we reached the bold summit, from whence the view was most picturesque and romantic. Before us rose Alps upon Alps, in one mighty mass of white glaring mountains, turning the darkness into the very light of day ; to the south, reposed the plain of Seyedabad, encircled by hills and studded with villages, teeming in the distance with a most variegated cultivation ; whilst high above this fertile vale, like specks on the horizon, towered the bold steepes of Sennah and Coordistan. The descent from this rocky, wintry region, though less difficult, was not less dangerous, for every moment we sank into mountains of thawing snow, when we had to struggle and toil in order to extricate ourselves from our uncomfortable position. Mid-day, we came into the vast plain of Hamadan, having walked for ten hours in snow and ice, wet and cold. I was stiff and benumbed, without feeling or sensibility, power or strength ; a sickening sensation had crept over every part of my body, and I scarcely expected to reach the town without fever, ague, or some other illness ; but He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, preserves His people wherever they are, and whenever they call upon Him. This I truly experi-

enced ; for in looking back upon the hardships I had undergone, and the fatigue I had endured, I cannot sufficiently praise the goodness of God in having thus, unscathed, and without any ill effects, permitted me to accomplish this most difficult part of my journey."

His work at *Teheran*, the capital of Persia, was not without either its encouragements or its hardships. The Jews received him with great kindness, and expressed their gratitude to him for the message of redeeming love which he proclaimed. One of their number, Dr. Aaron, was a distinguished physician, and occupied that position in the royal household. His son had given Mr. Stern a letter of introduction. But he hastened to see the Missionary without waiting for the delivery of the letter. His intercourse with Mr. Stern was such, as to assure him, that the physician was deeply convinced of the truth of the Christian revelation. On parting with him, Mr. Stern said : " Doctor, I hope the message of redeeming love, will, ere long, cease to be only a topic to occupy the lips, but be practically felt in the heart, and make you and yours happy through faith in the sacrifice and death of our adorable Saviour." " The heart knows its own bitterness !" was his reply ; and, with evident emotion, he exclaimed, after a little pause, " We are in Persia, where the sword of persecution is suspended over our heads, and woe to us, if, by a premature act, we arouse the vengeance of our enemies ; but of this you may be assured, that many in Koshan will as intently love Christ and his Gospel, as they formerly rejected the one, and despised the other."

" My work in the capital being accomplished, I set out for Mazanderan, an entirely new and untried missionary ground. My journey over the snow-clad Demawund, was one of the most trying and difficult I ever performed ; and only those who have travelled in regions where the extremities of heat and cold, rain and snow, incessantly alternate, can conceive the full extent of the toil and sufferings I had to endure. But a merciful Providence guided and protected me, and the privilege of infusing a spirit of inquiry among hundreds of Israelites, who never heard the message of salvation, or exercised their minds on the topics of religion, made me forget all the hardships I had encountered, and prepared me to meet all the troubles that still awaited me."

The journey through the rugged and narrow defile of Kohrood, and the magnificent prospect which lay before him of the plains of Koshan, with pleasant-looking villages and mulberry planta-

tions, was most impressive. Far beyond, and apparently on the very verge of the horizon, "rose the bold and dark range of the Elburg, and the glistening, snow-clad Demawund, with its lofty cone tapering towards the sky."

"On the night of April 19th (1852), we slept in a ruined caravan-serai, near the peak of the venerable Demawund. I have experienced most severe frosts in Persia, but never did I feel a more intense and biting cold than in these lofty regions. I was actually obliged to keep my hands and feet in constant motion, in order to maintain vital heat in them. My servants and muleteer, who did not feel inclined to imitate my example, lay on the ground almost insensible. With great difficulty I roused them, and tearing down a few beams of wood which lay across the roof of a decaying stable, I lighted a fire, and gave to each a cup of tea; this revived their spirits, and prepared them better to resist the benumbing effects of the frost."

At *Mosul*, Mr. Stern had his first introduction to Mr. Hormund Rassam, who had been the able assistant of Sir Austin Layard, when he was engaged in his successful excavations in Assyria. Mr. Rassam then filled the post of British Vice Consul, and was most useful to the Missionary, in introducing him to the president and vice-president of the Jewish community. They were eventually to meet again under circumstances of terrible suffering and danger. The captive Missionary, on the heights of Magdala, was to receive as his fellow-prisoner, the Envoy, whom the Queen of England then sent to deliver the captives out of the hands of Theodore of Abyssinia. So chequered and uncertain, are the conditions of our earthly pilgrimage!

"Mosul, the modern Ashur, as Jews and Christians pompously style it, is separated from the ruined and buried metropolis of that vast and pristine empire, from which it derives its appellation, by the muddy and rapidly-rolling waters of the Tigris.

"The town, from the eastern bank, looks picturesque and imposing; but no sooner has one crossed the tottering and rotten bridge of boats, than the eye gazes on unsightly streets, despicable bazaars, and dilapidated and decaying houses. The dire rule of avaricious governors has converted whole quarters, where formerly thousands of people vied with each other in honourable industry, into fields and deserts. The number of beggars, who attack the passengers in the streets, is also quite distressing. Long misrule and anarchy appear to have destroyed all energy, and the heart swells with indignation at the sight of poverty and want in a place where vast fields lie uncultivated around the city walls, which, with the smallest labour, would reward the husbandman more than a hundredfold."

Our traveller passed through *Nestoria*, in the expectation of being able to visit a Hebrew Colony in that region, of which he had heard. The weather became so severe and winterly, that he was obliged to abandon this intention. He received much kindness among the Nestorian Christians, who assembled in considerable numbers, and gave him a respectful greeting.

“At sunset we came to Bervarg, a district inhabited by Nestorians and Coords; and without making any application for quarters, I rode up to the bishop’s residence and dismounted. His lordship did not at first feel inclined to admit me into his house; but when I told him I was an English missionary, he appeared quite delighted, and endeavoured to make me as comfortable as his circumstances would permit. A little before night, he informed me that himself and chaplain were going to vespers, and, if I felt inclined, I might accompany them. I readily accepted the invitation, and with my two ecclesiastical friends, set out for the rocky pyramid, on whose pinnacle, far removed from this nether world, I was told stood the sacred edifice. The ascent to this ‘*Superas ad auros*’ sanctuary was, however, no easy task. The venerable bishop, in his simple Coordish garb, with sandals on his feet, and a staff in his hand, bounded over rock and precipice with the agility of a mountain goat. I attempted to follow, but the first few steps admonished me to be cautious. The old man, perceiving my distress, advised me to disencumber my legs of a pair of unwieldy travelling boots; this I did, and supported on his insignia of office, reached the summit of a wild rocky steep, and stood at the entrance of a crypt, which nature, little aided by art, had provided as a temple for these wild mountaineers. The door, which consisted of a massive stone, was closed by a formidable wooden bolt; this the priest withdrew, and with a crash it turned on its hinges and disclosed a dreary, bleak and dismal interior. The bishop immediately took his steel, flint and tinder out of his pocket, and with the help of a few dry stalks, lit a greasy glutinous earthen oil lamp, which instead of diffusing any light, only made the darkness more perceptible. During this process the chaplain had commenced the service, in which his patriarchal diocesan, at certain intervals, with a sonorous voice, joined. There was a melancholy stillness and saddening gloom around the insulated sanctuary, which solemnized the mind, hushed all sublunary feeling, and elevated the soul in prayer and praise to its Creator.

“For a moment the deepening shadows of night, the hollow notes of the worshipping priests, and the unearthly silence of the whole scene, reminded me forcibly of the primitive Christians; but the fervour of their devotion, the purity of their lives, and the entire consecration of their all to the Redeemer, are things for which we must yet prayerfully wait in the Nestorian Church. At the conclu-

sion of the service, the door, by the united efforts of bishop and priest, was again closed, and guided by the glimmering light of the stars, we tracked our way down the perpendicular declivity to the episcopal residence."

There was no order, or condition of men, with whom Mr. Stern did not communicate, and to whom he did not seek to propound the tenets and preciousness of the Gospel. Persia has always been known as the centre, from which the followers of Zoroaster have found their way to other parts of the East. Of these, Mr. Stern makes the following remarks :—

"In the evening my friends, the followers of Zoroaster, known by the name of Ghebres, or fire-worshippers, invited me to spend a few hours with them, in order that I might explain to them the doctrines of Christianity, which had excited so much interest and inquiry among the Jews. I immediately repaired to their cells, and without interruption declared to them all the elementary truths of our holy religion, viz. :—the compassion and goodness of God ; the fall and corruption of human nature ; and our final redemption and justification through the atoning blood of Christ. They acknowledged that the religion of Jesus, if thus clearly and plainly propounded, must enlighten and convince the mind ; but upon making the question more personal, they became very uneasy, and anxious to terminate the conversation. They asked me for Persian New Testaments, but having disposed of the few I had with me, I lent them my own copy, which I believe was read the greater part of the night and the whole of the following morning. They told me that they would write to Teheran for Bibles, as I had interested them in the contents of the same."

This chapter, and the summary of Mr. Stern's labours in Persia, may suitably be terminated, by the recital of an incident which followed his intercourse with the Ghebres.

"Before I retired to rest, an incident occurred, which I record simply because it shows the anxiety which was manifested to obtain our books. A poor Jew, during the evening, came for a copy of the Hebrew Gospel, but as I was engaged with the Parsees, he waited till I left their room, and then in a most suppliant tone made his request. Unfortunately, the boxes had been closed and packed, and my muleteer swore by the life of Mahomed and the beard of Ali, that if the cases contained Korans, and the Jew wanted to become a Moslem, he would not be disturbed at midnight, and untie his loads. The poor man, when he heard this, was in great distress ; still nothing could shake his determination, for he said : 'The gatekeeper may try to eject me (it being late and contrary to the regulations to loiter about in the caravanserai at this hour), and

your muleteer may scold and maltreat me,—I love Christ, and will have his revelation.’ I could no longer resist this appeal, and so unpacked one of the loads, which occupied me more than half-an-hour, and presented him with a Gospel; and I believe that a present was never more gratefully acknowledged. He actually fell at my feet, and alternately kissed the book and my boots; even in going away he clasped the little treasure to his heart, and, with eyes raised upwards, blessed the donor of this valued gift. I mentioned the circumstance to Mullah N., who told me he knew the man, and that he was both sound in mind and well acquainted with the Bible.”

The wheat and the tares are everywhere permitted by God to grow together. In the most benighted regions of the world, the Lord may have “a seed to serve Him.” From the uttermost parts of the earth songs of praise shall reach the once favoured, but now degraded countries of Messopotamia. In the Lord’s appointed time, they shall join in these songs of redemption, and witness to the blessing which has followed the labours of his servants.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONSTANTINOPLE.

More than ordinary perception and judgment are needed, in the appointment of Missionaries to the various, and sometimes untrodden fields of labour, to which they may be called. Although the human heart is everywhere the same, and is equally exposed to the corrupting influence of sin and evil, there are national characteristics which cannot be overlooked, and there are effects of training and custom, which require thought and careful treatment. The idiosyncracies of the Jewish character, and the conditions under which the Jews are brought up and educated, are almost peculiar to themselves ; and the agency employed to combat their prejudices, and to meet their difficulties, should be special, and carefully adapted to the purpose. There are some men who have a singular power of conformation to the circumstances which surround them, and to the people with whom they may be brought into contact. Such a man was Henry Stern. But there are others, who are only fitted for specific fields of action, or for a certain type of work, and to that they should be confined.

Mr. Stern's labours in Mesopotamia, Persia, and the regions to which he had been first called, extended over a period of nearly eight years. He had been a witness of a remarkable change for the better among the people to whom he ministered. All classes now listened with attention to the message of salvation, and readily accepted the Christian books which were offered to them. "Rabbis and teachers, bankers and merchants, toiling artizans and itinerant pedlars, gratefully received these messengers of the Gospel. The attempts of the leading rabbis, to oppose the influence of light and knowledge, which were thus spreading among the

people, had only served to excite controversy and stir up disunion among their respective flocks. There were encouraging indications, that the power of Christian faith was reaching many minds and hearts, among the thousands of Israelites who lived at Bagdad. A Dépôt, for the sale of Bibles and books, affording, moreover, a convenient centre for intercourse with the Jews, had been established. An Industrial Institution had also been tried, to which those who might be suffering persecution for conscience sake, might resort, and earn their daily bread. Some excellent friends of the Society provided the funds, by which this Institution was commenced. But the cost of maintaining it, and the persecution, to which the Jews who resorted to it, had to encounter, as well as other difficulties, led to its discontinuance.

Mr. Stern had enjoyed the fellowship of several of our most energetic Missionaries. He was to be followed by those who had earned for themselves "a good degree" in the things of the kingdom of heaven. It is not, however, my intention to make mention of the efforts and successes of other labourers in this or other important fields of labour; but only to keep in view the one character, whose Biography it is my happiness to record.

The time was now approaching, when Mr. Stern was to be called to another sphere of Missionary work. His arduous duties, and exhausting journeys, had in a measure affected his general health, and other circumstances arose, which indicated that a change was desirable. The cholera had prevailed at Bagdad with alarming intensity. About four hundred of the Jews, and four thousand of other natives, died from the effects of this malady; and numbers of others had perished elsewhere, who had vainly sought by flight to escape from its ravages. Mrs. Stern was seized by this disorder in its very worst form. The efforts of the medical attendant to arrest its progress, by means of the usual remedies, had been apparently useless, and death seemed imminent. When human skill failed, the Lord graciously interposed. The English Resident kindly offered the use of his boat, into which the apparently dying patient was placed, and conveyed, from the infectious atmosphere of the town, to Ctesiphon, where the English had encamped. The symptoms, in a short time, appeared to be more favourable. During this terrific

struggle between life and death, not a native would approach the tent of the sufferer, nor minister to her wants. And when, through the mercy of God, our Missionary saw the evidences of convalescence in his own beloved wife, he was himself more fit for a hospital than for missionary exertion. But with characteristic earnestness, he was ever at hand, to use the occasion, in order to point his afflicted brethren to the Lamb of God; though he recorded, that his eyes were so swollen and inflamed, that he could scarcely see to read or write.

At this time, a change was about to take place in the *personnel* of the Mission at *Constantinople*. The Rev. J. O. Lord, who was at the head of it, had determined to return to England. The London Committee at once perceived, that a twofold object might be attained:—the restoration of Mr. and Mrs. Stern to their wonted health, and the settlement of one of their most able and successful Missionaries, at this important station. It was therefore resolved that he should become head of this Mission; and however great the sorrow at leaving many, to whom the Missionary had become endeared, this arrangement was welcomed as a gracious interposition of Divine Providence. The confidence of the Committee in their faithful Missionary, was expressed in the Resolution by which he was asked to take charge of the Mission at Constantinople, as “an event which the Committee would contemplate with the greatest satisfaction;” and it was added, that, should “he be able to comply with their wishes in this respect, he be left to exercise his own discretion as to the expediency of immediately relinquishing his present post, and that he be requested to state, what under the circumstances, he would consider most desirable for the Bagdad Mission.”

On the 19th of May (1853), Mr. and Mrs. Stern arrived at the Turkish Capital. They had left many who had become deeply attached to them personally, and a goodly company who mourned over their departure, inasmuch as the devoted Missionary had been the instrument of leading them to the Saviour of sinners. His new sphere of action presented even greater opportunities of usefulness. Many of his Bagdad friends were connected with Constantinople by the duties of their calling, and from Persia and other parts

of the East, as well as from Europe, he knew that he would meet with representatives of his own nation.

One of the most happy features of the change of station which Mr. Stern experienced, was his association with a greatly increased number of Christian brethren, who were employed by various Missionary Societies. He seemed to be brought into more immediate contact with the Christian agencies and organizations, which were engaged in the Lord's work in the civilized world. The Rev. James Haldane Stewart used to be at that time a mouth-piece, through whom a call to united prayer, was heard in most parts of the Mission field. This was further developed, and perfected, through "the Evangelical Alliance." These were seasons of great spiritual refreshment to the labourers in distant lands, and at the beginning of 1854, Mr. Stern alluded to the manner in which the season had been commemorated :—

"You will no doubt be glad to hear that Mr. Stewart's call for united prayer was cheerfully responded to by the missionaries, and many of the English and American residents in Stamboul. The meeting (owing to our various duties on the Sabbath, and also the scattered position of our homes) was held on the second day of the year. Mr. Goodell, the senior missionary, presided. Several appropriate addresses were made, and prayers offered up for the conversion of Jew and Gentile, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and the world at large. A deep feeling of solemnity pervaded the numerous assembly, and I am certain that no one left the devotional meeting without mentally exclaiming, 'It was good for me to have been there.'"

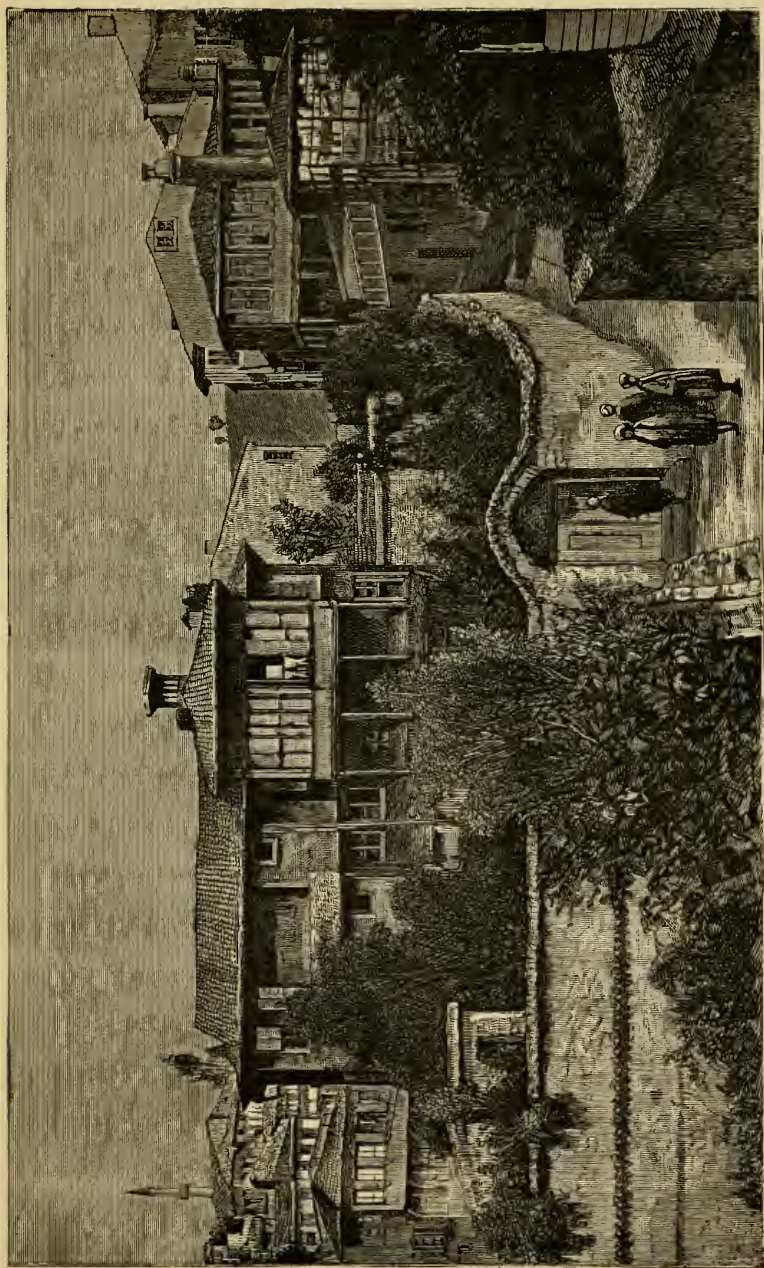
Constantinople has always been the scene of much contention among rival sects, and cruel persecution against the inoffensive Jews. The members of the Greek Church have been wont to believe, that it was a meritorious act to maltreat and insult the Jews, during the season of Easter. So fanatical was their conduct, that, during that week, hardly a Jew ventured to appear in the streets, knowing to what wanton cruelties they would inevitably be exposed. Mr. Stern was one of the chief instruments through whom a Petition was presented to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British Ambassador, whose decision of character, and statesmanlike ability, had raised him to the pinnacle of ambassadorial power and usefulness. The petition was signed by more than fifty clergymen, bankers, and merchants, and stated :—

“That your petitioners have observed with deep distress the wanton and heartless abuse to which the Jews of this city are subjected, year after year, at the season of Easter. The treatment alluded to is not mere annoyance, but positive bodily maltreatment, of which many of them have been eye-witnesses even in the streets of this capital, but which they are assured on competent authority often proceeds to much greater extremes in the provincial towns and villages. Without wholly exculpating the Roman Catholics from participation in such conduct, they have no hesitation in saying that it is from Greeks chiefly, if not entirely, that most of the injurious treatment proceeds. Your petitioners cannot doubt for a moment, that your Lordship and every generous-minded individual, whether of the Protestant, the Roman Catholic, the Greek, or any other Church, must feel such unmanly conduct to be altogether unworthy of the Gospel of Christ, and even inconsistent with the duties of good citizenship, which it is so desirable to maintain at all times, but especially at the present crisis. In these circumstances, it has occurred to your petitioners, to request your Lordship, and the Ambassadors of the United States, of Prussia, of Holland, &c., to whom petitions similar to this are to be presented at the same time that this reaches your Lordship, to use your best endeavours with the Greek Patriarch, to induce him to exert the whole influence of the Greek clergy for the suppression of the conduct above alluded to, conduct which in many instances is prompted by superstitious and mistaken feelings, but which they would hope most commonly proceeds from mere thoughtlessness.”

Such were some of the afflictions to which the sons and daughters of Abraham were periodically exposed. The influence of the authorities, in a measure, checked these outbursts of fanatical frenzy, but never completely subdued them. Nor were these the only terrors, which again and again overshadowed the lives and peace of these “wanderers among the nations.” The harrowing and infamous accusations, which had their rise in the darkest ages of an apostate Christianity,—the assertion that they murdered the young, and used their blood for some religious purpose,—had their counterpart in the annals of Constantinople.

“The old accusation of child-murder has again been excited against the Jews in Stamboul. The story, which I can only briefly give, is this:—A Mahommedan woman, who was in some distress, applied to a well-known Jewish *accoucheuse*, and as the latter had already rendered several favours to her applicant without receiving payment, she refused to attend to her request till the accounts were settled. On the 21st instant, the Turkish lady, accompanied by a female friend, went again into the house of the skilful Jewess, at Djibali, near Balat, and reiterated her former request. The *accou-*





VIEW FROM THE MISSION HOUSE AT HASKEY, CONSTANTINOPLE.





*cheuse*, as before, was deaf to entreaties and inaccessible to pity; money, and money alone, she declared, could secure her services, and gain her valuable assistance. This inflamed the resentment of the Mahomedan woman, who had evidently no liberal purse at her disposal, and to give full vent to her rage, she rushed into the street and declared that the Jews had stolen her child, and were going to kill it. Immediately, an excited multitude of Greeks and Mahomedans surrounded the house, broke the windows, and dragged the son of the Jewess to prison. On Friday, the 22nd inst., the crowd again assembled in the streets, and with yells and threats assailed every Jew who ventured to leave his dwelling. Towards noon, the popular clamour increased in intensity; fortunately, some French soldiers who had been ordered to the scene, immediately arrested the ringleaders, and dispersed the infuriated rabble. The rich Jews here, supported by Rothschild, are now taking steps against the revival of this odious and wicked calumny, which has so frequently brought ruin and desolation upon the guiltless Jews."

The hand of God was seen in other calamities, which befel the Jewish inhabitants of the city, and brought death and desolation to many a saddened home. The Jewish quarter of Ortakeuy has frequently been the scene of terrible conflagrations. The fragile nature of the timber-built tenements, and the narrow streets in which they are situated, render it most difficult to subdue the flames, or prevent their rapid progress. Our Missionary described, about eighteen months after his arrival, one such conflagration, and its results.

"You may perhaps have already seen in the newspapers an account of the awful conflagration, which, a few days ago, reduced the greater part of Ortakeuy to cinders. The fire broke out on Wednesday, Oct. 18th, at about four o'clock p.m., in an old house situated in the Jewish quarter. A few engines and a fire brigade were soon on the spot, but so irresistible was the progress of the flames, that before midnight, ruin and desolation marked the site of the most densely crowded locality on the Bosphorus. The whole Jewish quarter, including synagogues, schools, and every private dwelling, became a prey to the unsparing element; and thousands of persons, houseless and homeless, were driven to seek shelter in the open fields, or behind the smouldering walls of their former abodes. According to the lowest estimate 1300 adult Jews, besides women and children, lost by this terrific visitation the whole or the greater part of their property; and many who were rich and wealthy in the morning, at ten o'clock in the evening had no longer a bed for their wearied frames, nor a piece of bread to still the craving wants of their hungry children. My own house, which by a favourable change of the wind was unexposed to danger, I

opened to rich and poor, and numbers who a day before would have thought it a sin to cross my threshold, gladly availed themselves of the refuge my house afforded them. The next day, in order to mitigate the distress of the desponding and helpless multitude, I wrote a petition, which Mr. Schaufler, of the American Board, kindly sent round to the English and other Protestants ; and I am grateful to state, that the generous response to the appeal enabled us to dry the tears and gladden the heart, of many a disconsolate and sorrowing parent."

Day after day, Mr. Stern and his companions ministered to the wants of the destitute, the afflicted, and the dying. Some of his fellow-labourers were themselves laid up, through the toil and the sorrow which these visits involved. The Jews, whose means enabled them to flee from these scenes of misery, closed their doors, and removed to another quarter. This made more conspicuous, the wants and sufferings of those, who were unable to leave the abodes of suffering. Want and disease abounded, and the dead and dying were at times lying side by side. Tents had been lent by the Government, in order to afford some shelter to the houseless. The wretched inmates were in too many cases represented by the following occurrence :—

"In one tent I witnessed a sight which startled and horrified me beyond expression. It was occupied by a porter, called Joseph Chamal. The poor man had that morning been bereaved of his aged mother, and her decease made him quite frantic and disconsolate. He was standing near his tent, beating his face and raving like a maniac. I spoke kindly to him, but the words of sympathy and condolence only increased his piercing shrieks and wild gestures. Pointing to the bread, I said, 'Joseph, I have brought something for your children.' This diffused a thrill of joy over his sallow countenance, and with a convulsive grasp he seized my hand, and pressed it to his feverish lips. As the rain still poured down without intermission, I hastened into the tent to satisfy the immediate wants of the children. They were all three asleep, and, without looking at their sunken and pallid cheeks, their deep sighs and heavy breathing told me that even their slumbers were not free from anguish and pain. Not to disturb the weary sufferers, I softly lifted the heavy, wet coverlet, to cover the bread ; but what words can embody my feelings, when beneath this wretched covering I beheld the glazed eyes and stiff corpse of the mother of these sleeping and unconscious children. I was quite shocked, and a sickening sensation crept over my whole frame. The afflicted husband, in his passionate grief for a fond mother, had evidently quite forgotten his cholera-smitten wife ; and the afflicted woman, her

dying eyes fixed on the unhappy objects of her affection, must have resigned her agonized spirit into the hands of God. I was too much agitated to solace the poor man, or to break to him the mournful tidings. The people who were encamped near him knew of this accumulated stroke of affliction, but they were too much occupied with their own forlorn condition to pay any attention to the sorrows and woes of others. I exhorted him to confide in the Almighty, who would overrule all for his good. He did not believe what I said; for the faith of rabbinical Jews brings no conviction to the heart, nor consolation to the desponding soul. I promised to send him some clothing for his children, for which he appeared grateful, and gave me many blessings. It was now two o'clock, and as I had been on my feet since seven, and breathed a disease-laden atmosphere all this time, I was reluctantly compelled to retrace my way homewards."

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the sphere in which our Missionary brother was now engaged. It presented a variety of aspects, and required varied powers and attainments for its successful prosecution. He was incessantly thrown into contact with Jews, who reflected every phase of belief and unbelief; some rigidly observing every ceremonial, and others living in avowed neglect of every religious obligation. Some were deeply infected with the "oppositions of science, falsely so called." Others looked upon rabbinical superstitions with almost idolatrous reverence. With many, the evil lives and pursuits of certain nominal Christians, were a sufficient condemnation of the religion of which they were the professed followers. Some, on the other hand, held up the idolatry and fanaticism of the Greek and Latin Churches, as an all-conclusive reason for the abhorrence of Christianity itself. With these persons, differing so widely in their conclusions, and swayed by so great a variety of motives, Mr. Stern seemed to deal with remarkable aptitude and ability. While he was never afraid of meeting them on their own ground, and showing how the statements of their own rabbinical writers, and the traditions of the past, afforded satisfactory answers to Jewish objectors; he always led them to the inspired Scriptures, and contended that in them, and them alone, would they find infallible, and never-failing guidance. The appeal to "Moses and the Prophets," and hence to those Scriptures, the authority of which no religious-minded Jew could deny, was the rock upon which he took his stand, and the power which wrought effectually in the hearts of many who believed.

The current of controversy assumed at times an unexpected character, and led to declarations which indicated that a change was progressing in the minds of many Jews which was altogether unexpected.

“Our new proselyte, by his bold and unshrinking defence of the truth, has drawn upon himself the bitter animosity of the Jews in this suburb. This hatred would not merit any notice, did it not often vent itself in a more tangible demonstration than mere rude epithets, and vile and abusive language. Now and then our brother meets with Jews who protect him against the virulence of his opponents, but such an interference does not escape the resentment of the rabbis, who consider every one that refuses to join in their furious bigotry against Christianity, a railer at their authority, and an abettor of Protestantism. An incident of this character happened to day in the café of a man named I——. This individual, who generally visits me every Saturday, was listening to a controversy between C—— and several rabbis. The arguments advanced by our brother in favour of the Gospel, were old Testament passages and intelligent truth; and the replies of his antagonists, insidious sophistries and provoking personalities. This, the owner of the premises and several other Jews declared to be unfair; but the rabbis, careless about these remarks, continued their biting sarcasms and systematic misrepresentations. The café-keeper once more interposed; but this time it excited the indignation of the disputants, and they tauntingly exclaimed, ‘Aha, I—— is also a Protestant.’ The fiery Jew promptly retorted, ‘Yes, I am a Protestant, and I defy you all to prove that Protestantism is not true, nor its doctrines divine.’ These words were immediately reported to the rulers of the synagogue, and in half an hour after, I—— was informed by his friends that he would be excommunicated and imprisoned the next morning. The poor man sent at once to my house, to request my aid if he was thrust into prison and had his café shut. I promised to render him every assistance, but at the same time assured him, through his messenger, that he needed not to be terrified, as I felt quite certain that the very avowal of his sentiments would check the violence of his superiors, and secure him against their malice. My anticipation proved to be correct; for the Chief Rabbi and his coadjutors, being afraid lest their own severity should precipitate his secession from the synagogue, neither summoned him before their tribunal, nor fulminated against him the threatened anathema. He is now, more than ever, reading the New Testament, and I prayerfully hope that the truth which has to some extent enlightened his mind, will ere long, by the spirit of God, be applied to his heart.”

The persecution to which enquirers were exposed, and the difficulties which surrounded them in their acceptance of the Christian

faith, were repeatedly manifested at Constantinople. Of the baptism of a Chacham and his children, and the long period of anxious preparation through which the Chacham had passed, Mr. Stern had been writing, and then adds :—

“Soon after my arrival here he called on me, and expressed an earnest desire to be prepared for baptism. His deep and unostentatious piety shone so conspicuously in his whole character, that I would have had no hesitation to comply with his request at once, but as he appeared exceedingly timid, it was necessary that his life of faith in Christ should be exemplified in circumstances where his fortitude would be most tested. I advised him, therefore, to go to Salonica, and persuade the objects of his affection to become sharers with him in the blessings of the Gospel. He readily obeyed, and encouraged by the promises of Jehovah, set out on his perilous journey.

“In a former letter, I adverted to the troubles and trials he had to encounter, and the losses he sustained. One box, containing his few valuables, was forcibly seized, just as he was conveying it under the covering of night to the house of the colporteur of the American Board of Missions, and carried to the residence of the Chief Rabbi, where it still is. The streets to the harbour were closely guarded, that he should not escape. Even on the steamer, which, notwithstanding all the foresight of the rabbis, he reached safely, there were agents to arrest him under false charges; and had not God sent a kind and powerful Christian friend to his aid, he might now be languishing in the dungeons of the rabbinical inquisition, or groaning under the ambiguous justice of a Turkish Pasha. His wife, a quiet, docile woman, is, like all Eastern females, uneducated and ignorant, but he is now teaching her to read; and, by the grace of God, she may yet become learned and versed in Bible truths, and prove a blessing to numerous other females.

“An agent has been appointed by the Sublime Porte to represent the Protestant community. He might perhaps be able to save an enquirer from the vindictive vengeance of the rabbis, but he cannot prevent them ruining him in his business, and from depriving him of all he possesses. I lately adverted to an instance of this kind, where a father was surreptitiously deprived of his son, and on lodging a complaint, the worthy judge, who did not hold the balance of justice in an impartial hand, informed him, that the Jews claimed a sum of 90,000 piastres, a legacy bequeathed to the boy at the death of his mother, and upon his requesting to have the charge substantiated, the reply was, ‘cawass (policeman), throw this man into prison.’”

These persecutions took a variety of forms. They reached the young as well as the old. The Schools, which had been established in the Mission for the instruction of Jewish children, notwithstand-



ing the prohibitions of the Rabbis, had been both attractive and useful. In the hearts of many of the Jewish youth, the knowledge of the Saviour had found a place, and to many it had become the pathway of trial.

“The father of S——, though a devout adherent to the Talmud, notwithstanding his dread of the Protestants, placed his son, a boy of eighteen years, and firmly rooted in his faith, in one of the missionary schools. Here the youth, who had been taught from his infancy to consider the New Testament a fable, and every Christian an idolater, was startled to find that the Gospel he always regarded as the offspring of the brain, was really a heaven-born truth, and the salvation he derided, the life-spring of present and future happiness. He now sedulously devoted himself to the reading of the Old and New Testaments, a study which enlarged his mind, enlightened his conscience, and filled him with an unfeigned love and trust in the crucified Redeemer. These convictions naturally relaxed his strict obedience to the duties prescribed by the Talmud; and on being reproved, his honest mind, which revolted against hypocrisy, candidly avowed the new faith he had adopted. His family, who are near relations of the Chief Rabbi, were appalled at this unexpected declaration, and immediately efforts were made to win him back to the synagogue; but our young brother displayed an intrepidity and firmness which could not be shaken by human threats and violence. The father, who thought no torture unlawful towards an apostate son, put an end to all persuasions and promises, threats and curses, and with the cold severity of the superstitious bigot, he chained his own child in heavy fetters, and shut him up in a dark and solitary garret. In this confinement, he remained three days, without seeing any one except a clever Chacham, whose attempts to convince him of his errors only tended to confirm his belief, and to elicit a deeper and more heart-felt acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jesus. The affair began to excite some notoriety; and as the father dreaded to become the topic of public censure, he acted upon the artful advice of a friend, and placed his son in a Jesuit school, in the hope that the exhibition of a corrupt Christianity might show him his illusion, and make him exclaim, like the prodigal, ‘I have sinned against heaven and before thee.’ The young man shrunk with horror from the melancholy, miserable idolatry of Rome, and, in the accents of thrilling pity, he implored his parent to remove him from school. ‘No,’ was the insensible reply, ‘either worship the Christian Mary, or become a pious Jew.’ His temptations, struggles, and trials increased with each coming day; already he had deeply drunk of the cup of sorrow, and endured the most restless and rankling grief, but now should he also deny his Saviour, and make shipwreck of his faith? To bear the gripe of hunger and the buffets of friends for Christ and the Gospel, he could cheerfully do; but the sacrifice demanded of him

began to involve more than mere temporary privations and sufferings—more than mere tears and misery. These sad reflections, he felt, broke the last link between him and his father, between him and his home; and though poverty and dependence stared him in the face, he availed himself of one busy day, and while his parents believed him to be in school, inhaling lessons of Popery from a Jesuit priest, he had embarked on board a steamer, and with nothing but the clothing he had on, was crossing the deep to reach my house. Since that period (nine months ago) he has been in the Institution, where his child-like resignation, persevering diligence, and unassuming piety, have borne amply testimony of his fidelity to the Saviour, so that I could not resist his own request to admit him, by the sacred rite of baptism, into the fold of the Redeemer.”

The question is often discussed—to what extent has the influence of Christianity been realized in the Mahommedan world?—how far are we justified in believing that this influence is likely to prevail? There are two great declarations which are conclusive on this point—the first is, that the Gospel of Christ is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;” and the second, that “the kingdoms of this world” shall become “the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.” The numbers may be small, but it has been proved that even at this time the Lord has among the Moslems “a people for His name.” The promises of the future indicate, that they, with all other nationalities, will, in the Lord’s good time, bow in believing submission before Him, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The ministerial experience of Mr. Stern, made it clear, that the power of the Divine Spirit could reach the conscience and heart of the Moslem as well as others, and that the message of salvation might be made to them a “savour of life unto life.” In speaking of the interest which many of them were in the habit of displaying, in coming of their own accord, and discussing with him the relative claims of Christianity, he remarked:—

“One of them was for upwards of two hours disputing with some of our inquirers about the account of Christ’s sufferings, as recorded in the Gospels. The Mohammedan insisted, that God contrived a stratagem by which he delivered Jesus out of the hands of his enemies, and allowed them to crucify a counterfeit, in the person of Simon the Cyrenean; and the Jews maintained that the sacrifice of Christ was not only clearly predicted in the Old Testament, but also that it was indispensably necessary, as otherwise pardon of sins and reconciliation with God were utterly impossible. Our inquirers argued with great zeal and warmth, which so astonished the Mos-

lem, that he exclaimed, 'If you, the avowed enemies of the prophets, and particularly of Jesus, defend his mission, I must confess that we live in strange times, and in an eventful period.'

"My old acquaintance, the Ulema, called again at the dépôt. He had with him a huge Arabic manuscript, containing all sorts of controversial nonsense and trash, about the doctrines of the Gospel. I had read some parts of this learned effusion of the Mohammedan doctors in Bagdad, and so knew the leading arguments; but the Ulema insisted on my perusing again several passages, which he particularly admired. Having complied with his request, he said to me with much self-complacency, 'Is not this excellent? is it not quite incontrovertible?' 'You may call it excellent and incontrovertible,' I rejoined, 'whatever you like, but I certainly cannot waste such epithets on wilful perversions and misrepresentations.' 'What,' exclaimed he, 'did not Moses refer to Mahomed when he said, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, &c.; and did not Jesus predict his advent, when he spoke of the Periclutus, the Illustrious?' I showed him that Deut. xviii. 18, could have nothing to do with Mahomet, who was no Jew; and John xiv. 16, could not be perverted from *Paracletus*, the Comforter, into *Periclutus*, the Illustrious. He then wanted to prove that our Bible was corrupted, and as he did not succeed, he got angry both with the Koran, Mahomed and myself. I sold him an abridged Church History, and he promised to visit me again."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE CRIMEAN WAR.

The events of that terrible conflict, in which England and many of the great nations of Europe were engaged, are now only remembered by those who are somewhat advanced in years. The peninsula of the Crimea, was the scene of one of the most disastrous and costly wars which have ever afflicted humanity. But Constantinople was practically the base from which every warlike operation was carried on. It was at this point that the military and naval forces of England, France, Italy, and Turkey, gathered together ; and it was thence that they went forth in their united effort, to cripple the aggressive power of Russia.

There was no need of any external stimuli, to the ungodly influences which are incessantly at work in the metropolis of Turkey. But these were intensified beyond expression, by the flow into its vortex, during that eventful period, of the worst forms of vice and worldliness. With many, this field for adventure was most attractive. Among the nobler portion, the call was that of patriotism, philanthropy, or Christian love. But among the multitude, the hope and desire predominated, that out of the ruin and suffering of their fellow-men, they might obtain some advantage, and that either by legitimate or dishonest trade, the wants of the combatants might lead to their enrichment. This presented many obstacles to the successful prosecution of Mr. Stern's labours. The attention of most of the Jews was absorbed in the almost universal eagerness to accumulate wealth. To such he seemed to speak in vain, but to others, to whom the war had become disastrous, he found easy and willing access. There was wailing and sorrow in many homes. Apart from the occurrences which incessantly called forth the sym-

pathy of the Missionary towards the sick, the wounded, and the dying, there were constant openings of usefulness among those, to whom the war was the source of disaster.

“Amidst the throes of contending nations, and the convulsions of mighty empires, it cannot be expected that any community, however small and insignificant, should live within the roar and thunder of hostile arms, and yet remain indifferent and unconcerned about the issue of a contest which has roused so many passions, and involved so many interests. Throughout the wide-spreading regions of Mahomed’s empire, every breast is moved, and every nerve unstrung, and both the believers in the Gospel and the votaries of the Koran, anticipate with hope, not unmingled with fear, the best results from the present eventful struggle. The Jew—the isolated Jew—also, through the mist and darkness of the political atmosphere, sees with rejoicing the gracious dawn of that brighter day which will encircle the world with the golden girdles of beauty, peace, and happiness. Many, indeed, believe the era of millennial glory to be so near, that they imagine every day to witness the dissolution of the whole existing system. The Chacham in Ortakeuy, a famous cabalist, has already realized the prophecy in Joel ii. 28, ‘Your old men shall dream dreams;’ and such has been the solemn import of his nocturnal vision, that a general fast was proclaimed, and religiously observed by the people. Another old man, who gains his bread as an itinerant vendor of goods, in the dark of evening, and in the ominous vicinity of the Jewish cemetery, actually conversed with the King of Israel, who condescendingly announced to him the impending woes of the wicked Gentiles, and the unrivalled glory of righteous Israel.”

“In Constantinople, where the war has infused an unusual activity in every trade and commerce, so that rich and poor, high and low, are day and night immersed in business, and bent upon the objects of gain, it is most difficult to procure access to the people, or to win their ears to hear the message of salvation. Boys scarcely out of their teens, and old men unable to hold in their palsied hand the money after which they grasp, crowd around Nebuchadnezzar’s image, and with greater zeal than the Babylonians worship at the golden shrine. Thus, on the 21st ult., I met four Jews, with whom I had been discussing on a former occasion the doctrines of the Gospel, and, as usual, saluted them with a ‘buenos dias.’ They returned my salutation, and immediately we entered into a desultory conversation, which continued till we reached the place of business in the khan. Here the conversation suddenly terminated, and every one began to speak about the transmission of goods to Balaclava and the allied camps, with an anxiety and solicitude, as if life and death were pending on the issue of their speculation.

“The war, which is extensively contributing towards the external amelioration of the condition of the Stamboulees, is, I regret to

state, painfully deteriorating the general progress of the Gospel, and the moral and intellectual condition of the people. Thus among the Jews it was formerly very difficult to gain admission into their houses, still it was not entirely a useless effort, for the Missionary, in going from street to street, and house to house, here and there found one or more to whom he could communicate the message of the Gospel; but at present such exertions are only a waste of time, for one may traverse scores of lanes and alleys, knock at every door, and yet not meet in a single dwelling a boy above ten years of age. The bazaars, the camp, and Balaclava, are the centres of attraction where young and old, the vendors of illicit spirits, and the ruffian who has become grey in iniquity, collect together to gain by barter or cheaterly, what they would never have acquired by honest labour and useful industry. This idolatry of mammon among all communities in this city, has been productive of a most demoralizing influence; and if no superior power speedily arrests this rolling tide of a debasing heathenism, every vestige of religion will ere long be eradicated, and the most repulsive vice and sin be made subservient to the darling object of material interests. God grant that the political storm which is now convulsing the East, may purify the moral atmosphere, and waft away the clouds which hitherto concealed from Jew and Mahomedan the full beauty of the evangelical covenant.



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CRIMEA. THE CARAITE JEWS.

Among the places occupied by the Allies in the Crimea, was the town of *Kertch*. At that time, it was a busy and attractive seaport, and the centre of a considerable trade. About seventy Jewish families lived in the town, most of whom were persons of fortune and property. They were exposed to very brutal treatment at the hands of the rest of the inhabitants, and having been plundered of all that they possessed, they accepted an offer for their removal to Constantinople. On their arrival, the Turkish Government appropriated to their use a spacious khan, and gave them a small daily allowance. Their Chief Rabbi was an educated and well-disposed man, and there was very little prejudice against Christianity in the minds of any of their number. Mr. Stern and his colleagues, established a School in the khan, for the benefit of their children, and aided other Christian friends in ministering to their wants. "We can have no objection," said the Rabbi, "to anything that English Christians wish to teach our children, for we see that they do everything with kindness and persuasion, and not by force, as the Russian Christians do."

The presence of these Jews, naturally called attention to the state of the Jews who lived in other parts of the Crimea. These were known to be chiefly Caraites. The towns in which they lived were some distance from the coast, the principal settlements being Baktchi-Serai and Tchoufut-Kaleh. The distinguishing characteristics of the Caraites, is their rejection of the authority of the Talmud, and their professed acknowledgment of the Old Testament, as the only authoritative rule of faith. It has been conjectured, that they were among the Jews who did not return to Judea

from the Babylonian captivity, but who found an asylum in the Trans-Caucasian districts. The introduction of the Talmud among them at a later period of their history, is said to have led to serious discussions. Those who were faithful to the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures, separated from the others, and made their way to the Crimea. They are found in limited numbers in Southern Russia, and they form a small community at Jerusalem. They are more tolerant than the Talmudical Jews, which may arise from the fact, that there is no record of their ever having been persecuted on account of their faith.

The moral character of these Jews was so unexceptionable, that their honesty had passed into a Crimean proverb: "A Caraites word is as good as the most binding bond." This probably arose from the treatment which they received from the Government. They were allowed to retain their ancient usages without molestation, and were governed by their own laws. The Chief Rabbi occupied the position of their temporal as well as spiritual Governor, and was also the superintendent of all their schools. These, however, were but imperfect channels of instruction; for the Jews of the Crimea seemed to share in the general ignorance, which distinguished the inhabitants.

As soon as the tide of war had reached its limit, and there was a prospect of facilities being given for intercourse with these interesting people, Mr. Stern was instructed by the Committee to proceed to the Crimea for that purpose. The ground had been so far prepared by his intercourse with the Kertch Jews, that he embarked from Constantinople, with the confidence, that this project would not be without some encouraging results. He left Constantinople on the 24th of April, 1856, and wrote as follows, after the accomplishment of his mission:—

"On Saturday mid-day we reached Balaclava, the most busy and active little spot on the globe. I had some difficulty in finding a shelter in that crowded military position, where every hut is occupied by soldiers, dépôts, and government offices. On Tuesday, I rode to Sebastopol, and on my way visited Dr. Blackwood. He had been anticipating my arrival, and immediately invited me to remove to his place, near the front, a favour of which I availed myself the next morning. The subject of our excursion to Tchou-

fut-Kaleh, the principal seat of the Caraites Jews, which we had already discussed at Stamboul, again engaged our anxious solicitude ; and, as my time was limited, we resolved to start on the following day. Some other friends promised to join us ; but, as we were determined not to have our plans disconcerted, without waiting for anyone else, Dr. and Lady Alicia Blackwood, Miss Almroth, and myself, set out on our projected expedition. On our road, we crossed the Tchernaya, whose pellucid waters, only a few months previous, had been dyed with the blood of the valiant and brave. The scenery near this famous battle-field was devoid of all attractions ; naked hills, intersected by treeless valleys, constituted the uniform aspect of the country ; but though nature had been parsimonious in her gifts to this part of the Tauric Peninsula, late events have immortalized these heights and plains, and invested them with an historic interest which time will never obliterate. Our ride from the Traktir Bridge, up the Mackenzie's heights, conducted us to a Russian encampment, where we still saw numerous mounted batteries occupying the beetling crags and yawning chasms of the rocks, as if the mighty and strong who have fallen, have not yet satisfied these wide-throated engines of death. At sunset, we reached Baktschi-Serai, a dirty, barbarous Tartar town, situated between two rocks, and consisting of one unpaved street of a mile in length. The greatest difficulty was to find lodgings, as the inns were few, and the number of English visitors very considerable. By dint of perseverance, we secured a room in one of the hotels, for the ladies, and the Doctor and myself were obliged to content ourselves with a limited space in the saloon, which also served the purpose of a dormitory for the guests and our host's domestic establishment. The same evening I had an opportunity to make the acquaintance of several Jews, who received me with the greatest kindness. The poor people had never seen a missionary, nor heard the truths of the Gospel, and my presence therefore excited the utmost wonder. In fact, they gazed at me with a scrutinizing curiosity, as if I were a visitor from the unknown shores of the self-created rabbinical *Sambatian*. My books they were also most solicitous to see ; but as it was already late, I could not gratify their wish. At five o'clock the following morning I unpacked my box, in an open square before the hotel, and ere many minutes had elapsed, I was surrounded by numbers of Jews, who with avidity seized the books I offered for sale. To many I also addressed a few words on the great question at issue between Jews and Christians. They were quite ignorant of the essential doctrines of our belief, and, like most Jews who come continually in contact with the idolatrous ceremonies of the Greek and Romish Churches, they regarded every Christian as a superstitious worshipper of images and crosses. One young Jew was particularly attentive to all I said ; and on my meeting him again, on our second visit to Baktschi-Serai, he assured me that he had been most attentively reading the New Testament, and was quite anxious to be instructed in the truths of Christianity. The

eagerness of the Jews to get our books excited a spirit of emulation among the Tartars, and several requested me to give them New Testaments ; unfortunately, we had only one copy in Turkish with us, and this I did not wish to give away without receiving the full price ; subsequently, Dr. Blackwood gave it to some Tartars, who accepted it with intense joy and gratitude. At eleven o'clock, we mounted again, and started for Tchoufut-Kaleh, the home of the Caraites. The distance from Baktschi-Serai to this mountain city is only two miles, and to anyone who passed such a sleepless night as we all did, the bracing air of the hills, impregnated with the perfumes of numberless aromatic plants, which grew wild on every declivity, afforded quite a feast and delight to the senses. At the end of the gorge in which Baktschi-Serai is confined, the road becomes impassable for carriages ; we therefore left our vehicles in the charge of the drivers, and, partly on horseback, and partly on foot, clambered up the steep and slippery path, towards the aerial home of the secluded Caraites community. Near the summit we met the rabbi, riding along with a Russian officer. My eye, so long familiar with the Eastern Jews, at once recognized this individual as the rabbi, and immediately we entered into conversation, first in Hebrew, then in French, and at last we interchanged a few questions and answers in German. He was exceedingly civil, and invited me to proceed directly to his house, where I would find plenty of books to amuse myself till his return. I urged him to come back with us, but he had pressing business at Baktschi-Serai, which he was obliged to despatch. Leaving the rabbi, we entered, through a passage cut into the solid rock, the citadel of the Caraites. The whole place appeared deserted, and the tramp of our horses' feet on the hard stony pavement vibrated sadly on our ears. After winding our way through several narrow streets, in which silence and death-like inactivity seemed to reign, we suddenly came to a little shed, where five old men, in the Tartar garb, were indolently enjoying the fumes of the chibouk. I accosted them in Turkish, and they readily answered all my queries. One of them accompanied us to the house of the rabbi, the best and most comfortable building in the place. A relation of the chief received us, and immediately we were conducted to the best room, where the rabbi's wife, a young lady eighteen years old, was waiting to welcome her guests. I endeavoured to converse with the inmates of the house, but they were exceedingly ignorant, and to all I said, had one answer : 'The rabbi will be able to speak with you,' To linger away our time, we now visited the Synagogue, a neat building, hanging, like the houses, on the very edge of the rock. The interior was covered with carpets, and adorned with a row of silver lamps ; also the scrolls of the law were richly ornamented, and an air of wealth, comfort, and prosperity pervaded the whole sanctuary. Close to the ark of the law stood a glass case, which covered a magnificent, elaborately-worked silver cup, that was presented to the Synagogue in 1847, by the Dowager Empress of Russia."

Mr. Stern and his friends found a refuge in a Greek Convent, situated in a gorge some distance from this place. His narrative continued thus :—

“I now again began to think on the Caraites Jews, and quite despaired of accomplishing the whole object of my journey ; the Lord, however, never discourages the efforts of his servants. This I fully experienced ; for, when I despondingly abandoned all hopes of effecting any good among this long isolated community, numbers, quite unexpectedly, came to our encampment, and freely entered into conversation with me. They were all anxious for books and tracts, Gospels and portions of the Old Testament, and willingly paid the price I charged. A Russian officer, who could smatter a little German and French, together with the abbot of the convent, were also attracted to the spot. The abbot immediately inspected the books, but the sight of the Russian New Testament, of which we had several copies for distribution, quite frightened him, and he hurried away in the greatest trepidation. His friend did not share these terrors ; on the contrary, he appeared most desirous to purchase a New Testament, and had not the cunning dignitary watched him at a distance, he would gladly have secured a copy. To revenge himself on the jealous guardian of his orthodoxy, he bought a Liturgy and Gospel in Hebrew, which, I fear, will never be of great use to him. The Chief Rabbi of the Caraites, Chacham Solomon Beyim, together with several of his people, now also came riding to our encampment. He expressed great regret at his unwilling detention in Batschi-Serai ; ‘And now,’ said he, ‘if you are indeed a good brother, and your words and appearance tell me you are, mount a horse, and be my guest this night.’ This generous invitation I could not refuse, and as one of the rabbi’s companions had already alighted from his horse, I threw myself into the saddle, and the whole cavalcade, consisting of fifteen persons, slowly ascended the steep mountain of Tchoufut-Kaleh. We did not, as in the morning, enter the citadel through its rock-cut gateway, but made along the gorge till we gradually emerged into a beautiful dell, sheltered by lofty hills, and covered with umbrageous trees. This lovely spot is the cemetery of the Caraites, and, by some strange caprice, it bears the significant appellation of ‘the Valley of Jehoshaphat.’ The rabbi told me that there were forty thousand sepulchral stones in this secluded and peaceful home of the dead, besides myriads to whose memory poverty or indifferent friends had raised no honoured monument. Many of the epitaphs bore evident marks of antiquity, and I would have copied some of the inscriptions, had not the approach of the Sabbath, and the gathering shades of night precluded my doing so.”

Proceeding on his tour, he recounted the circumstances of his visit to the capital of the Crimea.



“In the afternoon we reached Simpheropol, the capital of the Crimea, and lately the military centre of the Russian forces. It being the Jewish Sabbath, the streets were literally crowded with the gaily dressed descendants of Abraham, who were wiling away the tedious hours of their day of rest. Our strong party attracted a general curiosity, and large numbers thronged around us, one recommending this, and another that lodging, as the best and cleanest in the town. The first we saw was, however, the most inviting; and so, after a hopeless search to find something superior, we were glad to install ourselves in the two rooms ceded to us by a Jewish family.

“Early in the morning, whilst my friends were still sleeping, I repaired to the Synagogue. The congregation were just engaged in prayers, and I therefore retired to the court, where a lively and animated circle was soon formed around me. My tracts at once riveted the eager gaze of all, but no sooner had they read a few lines, than a spontaneous shout arose, ‘A goy, a goy.’ I told them that I was no goy (Gentile), and losing no time, proceeded to explain to them the nature and the end—the hopes and the consolations of the Christian faith. As at Baktschi-Serai, so here, idolatry was again laid to my charge, but I repelled the assertion, and showed them that the Gospel deprecated idol worship, and only taught mankind to adore the true God, revealed in the Bible. This quite confused them, and they could not unravel the mystery, that I should be a Christian, and not an invoker of saints—a follower of Jesus, and yet not a devotee at the shrine of Mary. I now gave them a simple and explicit summary of our Protestant belief, and I feel fully persuaded that a discourse from the greatest rabbi could not have engaged the mind, and enlisted the interest of an audience, more deeply than I did, by my plain disquisitions on the fundamental principles and tenets of our faith. I sold a number of tracts, New Testaments, and Pentateuchs; but if I had had with me triple the number, they would have also been seized with avidity. On returning to my lodging, I found, close before the gateway, four boys and two adults, holding pictures and crucifixes aloft in the air, before which the superstitious multitude reverentially bowed and crossed themselves. Surely it cannot be wondered at, if the Jew, who sees such an exhibition of Christianity, rejects the message of mercy, and with the full provision for his salvation, descends, unconverted, unprepared, and unatoned, to the gloomy chambers of corruption.

“Simpheropol contains 10,000 inhabitants, of which number 2000 are rabbinical and about 800 Caraites. During the war, when business was greatly depressed in the interior, multitudes of Israelites flocked to this town, some in order to make contracts with the government, and others to traffic in the different camps. Many of these are still in the place, and very likely the majority will avail themselves of the facilities now afforded to trade with Turkey, and



either permanently establish themselves here, or at Sebastopol. In selecting a missionary station, the numerical strength of the population, and the central position of the place, both point us to Simpheropol, as the most eligible spot in the Crimea.

“On May 5th, we left again for Baktschi-Serai. On the road we met a part of the Russian army, on their march to the interior. All the officers, as we passed along, saluted us, and in their contented and happy looks, one could read the satisfaction they felt at the termination of the late fearful struggle. In the evening we reached Baktschi-Serai, and encamped on the hills near the town, where, to our great regret, we had an ocular demonstration that the severe rule of Russia had not blunted the thievish propensities of the Tartars.

“On Saturday, May 10th, I got an order for a passage to Constantinople, but as the steamer did not sail before five o'clock p.m., on Sunday, I complied with the request of my friends, and at half-past nine preached to the troops in the open air, and an hour later at head quarters, before the staff of General Codrington; and thus ended my short and pleasant trip to the Crimea.”

The Missionary was here addressing a part of the British army, at the termination of one of the most arduous campaigns, of which there is any record in military annals. The fields of the Crimea were dyed with the blood of the noble and the brave, who had purchased the final success of their country, by the sacrifice of their lives. Not many years afterwards, it would again be his privilege to address the brave troops of Great Britain. But then, it would be before the fortress of Magdala, amidst the mountains of Abyssinia. There, he himself would be among the fruits of their enterprise and energy, as a captive delivered from thralldom; but, in happy contrast with the conflicts of the Crimea, none fell before the weapon of the foe—no cloud o'ershadowed that scene of triumph and victory.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### TURKEY IN EUROPE.

“The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few.” These solemn and pathetic words of our Lord have been echoed from age to age. The inadequacy of the agency, through which an attempt is made to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, is a fact which no one can gainsay. The fields of labour which are continually presenting themselves to the attention of Missionary Committees, are not only numerous, but they occasionally offer new, or changed aspects, which demand new, or increased effort. These exigencies cannot be met with the very inadequate resources over which such Committees have control ; and they sometimes necessitate the relinquishment of one sphere of operation, in order that another may be occupied. Nor is it always possible to form definite conclusions on the wisdom of these changes, until the trial has been made. It is possible, that the new base of operation may not prove as advantageous and successful as there may have been reason to anticipate. To meet the necessities of these cases, Missionary journeys are an almost invariable characteristic of Missionary work. The many towns and villages which may be accessible, are in this way reached even when they cannot be occupied. The living voice of the messenger arrests and instructs if only for a time ; and the circulation of Bibles, books, and tracts, are the precious seed when the messenger has withdrawn, which in the hand of the Lord, is oftentimes fruitful in blessing.

Nor is this mode of operation without its distinctive advantages. Continued aggression on anyone of the strongholds of Satan, very

generally leads to combined and organised effort to resist and undermine. Rabbinical intolerance gathers together its forces, and uses its influence to destroy the effects of the Gospel. But when the soldiers of Christ pass in rapid succession from one stronghold to another, the enemies of the truth are not always prepared for the assault. An interest in their message, and an anxiety to become better acquainted with revealed truth, very often are the results of these desultory operations, and before any prejudicial influence can be exercised, the agents pass on to another part of the field.

From every Missionary Station, arrangements are almost invariably made for these periodical campaigns. Old ground is revisited, and new ground is broken. The incipient faith of some enquirers is confirmed, and to others who are "out of the way," the glad tidings, of redemption through Christ, are addressed. Throughout Turkey in Europe, large numbers of Jews are scattered. They form a large proportion of the population in *Salonica* (the ancient Thessalonica) and *Adrianople*. At *Brousa*, *Philopoli*, *Lom Palanka*, and other places, which have been familiarized to the readers of the accounts of the recent wars in the East, there are communities of Jews. Both *Salonica* and *Adrianople*, have been at various times occupied as Missionary Stations. But when these Missions were suspended, they were visited from time to time by the Missionaries from Constantinople.

In these journeys, Mr. Stern took a prominent part. To recount the nature of his intercourse with those to whom he was sent, would be the mere recapitulation of facts, incidents, and conversations, of which a sufficient number have already been given. The discomforts to which such travellers are exposed in these countries, although not insignificant, are small in comparison to those, through which Mr. Stern passed in Persia and other regions. They are continually dependent upon the hospitality—generally of a very selfish character—of the people amongst whom they sojourn. These were sometimes Mussulmans, and at other times Bulgarians, Roumelians, or members of the Greek Church. Our Missionary sometimes related, that while the Turk would accept whatever was offered to him as remuneration, without any controversy; the Greek or Bulgarian would be extortionate and dissatisfied, even when professing to be influenced by the most kindly feelings.

The country through which the traveller passes, is generally full of classical reminiscences. The approach to the Balkan mountains is imposing, the swelling undulations gradually assuming a more rugged and picturesque character.

“About noon we entered Trajan’s Pass, which is a great natural fissure through their very centre. In a military point of view, it has always been reckoned of great value, as the remains of Roman and other fortifications attest. Beautifully wooded on either side, and furnished with a clear rivulet running along its base, it afforded us quite a romantic ride of about four hours, after which we descended into the valley of Tchtimau, midway in which stands the town of the same name. Flocks were feeding in a space of at least 1000 square acres, on grass which for fineness and closeness was fully equal to that of an English meadow. The houses of which the town is composed were each fortified with mud walls supported by wattles, as a protection against the brigands and the wolves. As we entered, a marriage was being solemnized, and the procession shortly after moved down the street where our khan was situated, accompanied by the sound of the bagpipes. The bride and her companions were each dressed in black skirts, with scarlet bodices and aprons, their hair being plaited in long tresses down to their feet, and intertwined with all the silver coins of which their worldly fortunes were composed. The bridegroom and his fellows, were arrayed in the usual untanned sheep-skins, with caps made of black lamb-skins. When all present were united round the public fountain, the bride bowed three several times to the earth, and then the bridesmaids poured water upon her head. This part of the ceremony being completed, a large ring was formed, each semi-circle of which was composed entirely of one sex, and a very modest dance executed for a few minutes; after which all the guests departed to their several homes. The simple habits and customs of these people being such as Homer sings, it is a sad and solemn reflection, that their hearts should be none other than those, of which Jeremiah writes.

“Our journey on this day was made over a wide and uncultivated country, the geological formation of which was limestone. Our way sometimes passed over hills covered with stunted oaks, and again along the rocky beds of mountain torrents. The shades of evening, deepened by misty rain, fell upon us as we entered the village of Yeni Khan, where one of our Zaptiehs deemed it necessary to mount guard all night, as the place was so infested with robbers. The following morning, after five hours’ riding, we sighted Sophia, looking very dilapidated from the effects of the last earthquake. Its mosques were in ruins, and minarets in all directions had toppled over.”

On his return to Constantinople, Mr. Stern frequently found that he had opened new channels of communication with the Jews in other

parts of the land. Among the anxious and inquiring, correspondence was at times the result. Some of the more eager and decided, would abandon their homes and associations, in order to place themselves under Christian instruction, and to have free and continued intercourse with the Missionary. Many found that they had not escaped the watchful eye of their Jewish brethren, or the inquisitorial enquiries of the rabbis, who knew that their own position was endangered, by the conversion of any of their people to the Christian faith. The illustration which Mr. Stern gives in the following passage of such occurrences, is also accompanied by some pertinent remarks, concerning the difference between the conversion of the Jews, and that of others, who belong to any professing Christian sect.

“ I have at present a Stamboul rabbi, and another Stamboul Jew, under instruction, but I know that if the ‘ Beth Din ’ was aware of it, they would both be banished from the city, or incarcerated in the dungeons of the Chacham khoné (Jewish prison). Such a contingency can be evaded by the enquirer, if he at once renounces his allegiance to the Synagogue, and inserts his name in the register of the Protestants ; but those acquainted with the timid character of the Oriental Jew, know that before a man will do this he must have more than a superficial idea of the truth of Christianity. I have sometimes heard comparisons instituted between an enquiring Jew and an enlightened Armenian ; we might as well institute a comparison between an educated infidel Englishman, and an untutored savage in the sun-blighted deserts of Africa. The Armenian is a nominal Christian, the Jew an inveterate unbeliever ; the one regards his sealed and disguised Gospel with love and esteem ; the other looks upon it with loathing and disgust ; the one, from his infancy, is taught to worship and adore the blessed Jesus ; the other, from his infancy, is taught to abhor and to execrate that most holy name. In fact, it is a perfect farce to establish an analogy between the two, or compare the facility with which the one can leave his idolatrous Church, and join the pure reformed Church, with the difficulties, trials and obstacles, the other has to endure, when he secedes from the Synagogue, and embraces the Gospel of Christ. Think for a moment on the ingrained prejudices, the pharisaical spirit, the hatred and contempt of the cross—think on these and hundreds of other troubles which stare him in the face, and then, can you wonder that a man requires something more than a mere elementary knowledge of the Gospel—a mere transient impression of the truth, before he will yield obedience to Christ, and openly avow himself His follower ? I do not allude to these things to discourage. No ; we have abundant cause to

bless God for what, by His mercy, we have already been permitted to achieve, and for the many hopeful promises which incite us to more vigorous efforts in the future ; but I merely advert to these impediments, because I know that not a few of our friends imagine, that religious persecution, and rabbinical tyranny, are checked in Turkey, by imperial decrees and righteous laws.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### ARABIA FELIX.

About ten years had passed since Mr. Stern first gazed from the Persian Gulf upon the coast and mountains of Arabia. The enquiries he had then made concerning the Jews who were known to be dwelling in considerable numbers within the limits of that almost unknown region, had elicited but scanty information. The information indicated that they were the subjects of much oppression and persecution, and that their Moslem rulers were of the most fanatical character. However deep were his sympathies in the sufferings of his afflicted brethren, there seemed but a feeble prospect of the success of any effort to reach and befriend them. The cities sacred to Moslem superstition—Mecca and Medina—were situated within those boundaries, and the keenness of their superstitious devotion to the memory of the false prophet, prepared them to resist the intrusion of any Christian, into a territory, with which were bound up their most sacred associations.

From this almost “terra incognita,” communications occasionally reached the Missionary, during his residence at Constantinople. Trade to a limited extent was carried on between the Red Sea and the interior. The Sovereign authority is exercised from Constantinople—in which resides the Sultan, who as the Caliph, is head of the Moslem religion. This would lead to the maintenance of some connecting links with this remote possession. The pilgrimages of the Moslems to their sacred shrines, would also afford another channel by which Mr. Stern might be informed of the state of the country and of the people. His mind became increasingly impressed with the

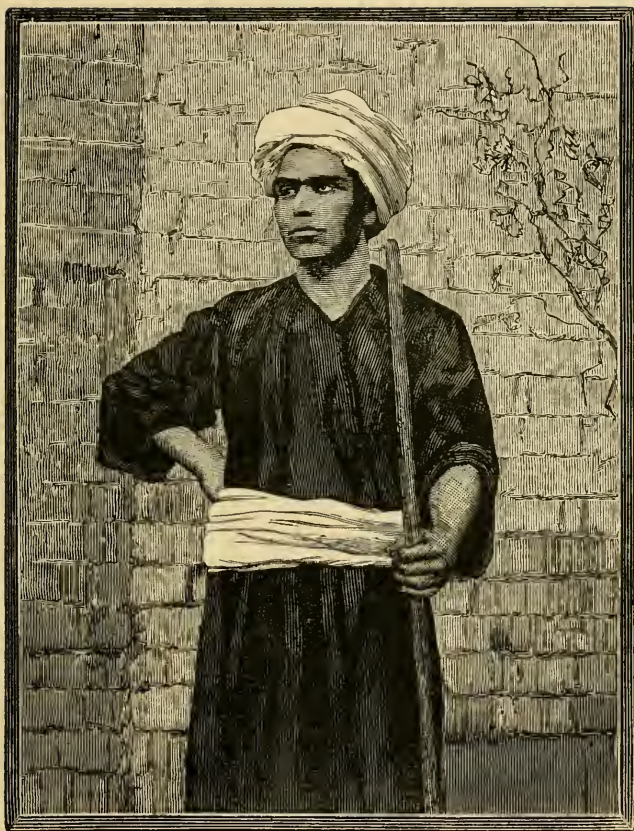
duty of going to these outcasts, with the message of comfort and reconciliation. If the poor Jews of Persia had found balm and deliverance in the Gospel of Christ, their afflicted brethren in Arabia seemed to cry aloud, "Come over and help us."

It need hardly be stated that it was not without many misgivings, and much anxiety, that the London Committee consented, that Mr. Stern should endeavour to penetrate into the interior of Arabia. They had had the fullest experience of his tact, ability, and unequalled qualifications for such an enterprise; and July 12th, 1856, saw him embarking at Constantinople, and commencing this uncertain and perilous undertaking. During his absence, arrangements were made for the removal of his family to England. Immediately on his arrival at Cairo, he took steps for the further prosecution of his journey. Locomotion in the East is tedious, and it was not therefore until the 18th August that Mr. Stern, writing from *Djiddah*, on the Red Sea, could afford any information concerning the prospects of his enterprise. All those who had personal or relative acquaintance with the condition of Arabia, expressed but one opinion concerning the terrible risks which such a journey would involve. They questioned the possibility of his penetrating into the interior, and assured him, that the jealousy and watchfulness of the Moslems were so great, that his life would be in imminent and continual danger. To push onward, notwithstanding such warnings, required a measure of moral courage and a confidence in the protecting care of God, of which there are few examples. A witness and earnest, must have been conveyed to his mind by the Spirit of God, that it was upon His Master's business that he was going forth, and in obedience to that Master's mandate, and that therefore he had nothing to fear. This experience, however uncommon, has upheld in time past, some of the Lord's most distinguished servants; and a Paul entering without hesitation the hostile city of Jerusalem, or a Luther facing his powerful enemies in the city of Worms, are among the witnesses in time past, how divine strength is made perfect in the weakness of the people of God.

At the time of Mr. Stern's arrival, *Djiddah* was the scene of raging epidemics. Fever and cholera were doing their terrible

work. Yet amidst the sufferings and groans of the dying, he gave a good account of his own health, and expressed his unabated confidence in the sustaining Providence of God. But soon after the despatch of this intelligence, he was laid low by fever, and passed through ten days of excruciating agony. Throughout this great trial, he had no doubt of his recovery, believing that "Arabia Felix was waiting for the message of salvation." He described the circumstances of his embarkation for *Hodeidah* (the point from which he was to penetrate into the interior), the vessel in which he was a passenger called the "Futty Sultan," being the property of an Indian Hajee.

"The sea was delightfully calm when we heaved anchor, and our vessel, impelled by a soft northerly breeze, glided imperceptibly over the smooth expanse. Unfortunately, we had not yet quite passed the rocks and coral-reefs which render the ingress and egress of the harbour of Djiddah so dangerous, when a hot blast came sweeping from the desert, and arrested our onward speed. The Arab pilot, unskilled in his profession, ordered the ship's head to be turned—a manœuvre which brought us on a hidden rock, where for about an hour we had the dreary prospect of being engulfed by the billows that foamed and raged around us. The noise and turmoil was terrific. Servants and masters, women and children, in mingled confusion, raised the most plaintive cries. Even old men, to whom the tenets of the Koran ought at least to have taught resignation, rushed about quite frantic with fear and terror. The sailors and the captain (Mr. Lawless) alone remained tranquil and composed, and to their laudable conduct, and patient exertion, the ship and all on board owed their safety. Having thus providentially escaped from a watery grave, we returned again to Djiddah, and procured divers to examine the vessel's bottom. She had sustained some severe injuries, but being built of teak wood, they were not serious enough to endanger her voyage to Bombay. The owner, Hajee Jacob, to manifest his gratitude for this happy escape from shipwreck, distributed in the same afternoon upwards of thirty thousand rupees among poor pilgrims; and on the following morning, amidst the elaborate blessings of these famished devotees, we steered again out of the harbour. We had now secured a more experienced pilot, and, without any accident, accomplished, in six days, the voyage to Hodeida. On landing, I immediately proceeded to the house of the only Christian firm on the coast of the Red Sea. I was provided with the best recommendations, and my reception was therefore exceedingly courteous. The same evening, two merchants from Sanaa came into the office where we were sitting, and, in the hope of eliciting some information, I broached the subject that had led me to visit Hodeida. My friend immediately



THE REV. H. A. STERN IN ARABIA—FELIX.



stopped me, and, lowering his voice, said in Italian, 'Don't mention to anyone that you intend to cross the mountains.' Three days after this, he informed me that he had made arrangements for my departure; but as the country, particularly Yemen, was in a lawless and anarchic state, it was necessary to avoid any precipitate movement."

And now, with anxious and prayerful interest, we are about to follow our traveller on his perilous journey. There is not a step throughout it which is not accompanied by danger. In the letter of introduction which his new friends at Hodeida give him to their correspondent at Sanaa, he is called "the Dervish Abdallah." As the word dervish signifies one, whose life is devoted to the promotion of some religious object, and the Arabic name Abdallah means "the servant of God," it is not inappropriately that, for a time, the Missionary should bear this cognomen. His own recital explains the necessity which existed, for the adoption of a certain dress, and a certain habit of life. But everywhere, and among all classes and creeds, the banner of the Gospel is lifted up, and Moslems as well as Jews are made to realize, that it is with no uncertain sound that he proclaims the object of his mission.

"Before entering on my arduous undertaking, I had to adopt the native dress, and also to shave my beard, head and moustaches, *à l'Arabe*; and the metamorphosis was so complete, that persons with whom I had become intimate doubted my identity. The only travelling companion I could procure was a donkey-driver, an uncouth black Arab, of size and limb strong enough to decide the combat in any single encounter. We started at seven in the evening, and trudging over a barren and arid desert, did not halt till we reached Bageil, which we did at nine a.m. In the coffee-shop where we alighted, we met upwards of a score of Arabs. They gave us a loud salaam, which we returned in a similar strain. The difficulty was where to stow ourselves, as the reed-hut was completely filled. Ali, my worthy donkey-driver, in whose good graces I had during our night's march established myself, wanted to proceed farther—a proposition against which my aching frame decidedly protested. The Bedouins noticed our embarrassments, and contrary to the selfish character of their nature, they crept closer to each other; and, rather than mount again, I wedged myself between them, and patiently endured all the torments which a thermometer at 98°, and twenty unwashed and unclothed Ishmaelites, could inflict. My beard and garb, although they might have done credit to any of the sons of the desert, did not entirely conceal, from the keen eyes riveted upon me, the difference of our



country and home. Many and various were, therefore, the questions addressed to me; but what particularly interested all was—the difference of our respective creeds. ‘Don’t you believe in Mahommed? Have you read the Koran? Is Saidno Yesua (our Lord Jesus) coming again? And did He really die to redeem us?’ These queries furnished abundant matter to occupy the tedious hours of the day; and however unpleasant the close atmosphere of this Arab hospice was to the lungs, I did not regret having made it my abode. During the night the camels which carried my books arrived. I immediately repaired to the encampment, and selecting a limited quantity for the mountains, loaded the donkeys, and set out for the highlands. We were now slowly emerging out of the desert, and the sterile region which confines the sea. The aspect of all around changed as we advanced, and it was quite a pleasure to see again patches of green grass, and fields waving with an abundant harvest. About sunset we came to the first deep mountain pass, where we found a magnificent and varying prospect awaiting us. Close at our feet lay an extensive valley, dotted with villages and the castellated forts of many a daring chief. Around, and in the rear, rose the summits of Tebal Boarra, distinguished for their furrowed outlines, which were indistinctly visible in the concentrated light of the setting sun; and far away, in the shades of struggling night, uprose towards the dark sky the bold and frowning ridges of the towering Harass. Ali, who for more than a quarter of an hour had been watching the shifting of the moving clouds, suddenly called out, ‘Ya Abdallah, Ya Abdallah, beat your donkey and hurry on, for there is a storm in the sky.’ The words had hardly been uttered, when several quick and bright flashes enveloped us in their lurid glare. The thunder roaring in the distance now neared the mountain, until its loud peal, which was echoed among the wide-spreading rocks, made the very ground on which we were standing tremble beneath our feet. I sought shelter from the contest of the elements between two blocks of granite, and here, protected from the pouring torrent, I witnessed one of the most sublime spectacles. The storm lasted above half-an-hour; but the lightning continued all the way, now brightly revealing the slippery path upon which we were treading, and then again consigning us to an impenetrable gloom. By dint of persevering toil, we at last reached El Beia, a little hamlet, and there we took up our abode for the night. At dawn, in company with another party, we started again. The rains of the evening were succeeded in the morning by a dense fog. Mountains, valleys, villages and castles, were all hidden by the dense mists which ascended from the saturated fields. I had proceeded in advance, and forgetful of the tortuous winding of our path, was quite unaware that we had deviated from it until we came to some shepherds, who kindly conducted us into the road from which we had wandered. At ten a.m. we rested near an Arab hut, to bait our animals, and also to eat our morning meal. This latter was quite a primitive affair; it consisted simply of hot half-baked cakes,

on which we poured some of the butter we carried with us ; when this was done, one of the party seized an earthen saucepan, and having kneaded the whole into a paste, each one dashed his right hand into the black pot, and in profound silence swallowed his repast. Our travelling companions here left us, and myself and Ali pursued again our toilsome and solitary march. We had now crossed the plain, and entered into deep ravines, overhung on both sides by perpendicular heights, which entirely excluded the fiery rays of the scorching sun. Between these divided rocks we found a mountain torrent—a cheering and refreshing sight to eyes that had not seen for many months a tiny brook, or a drop of drinkable water. We followed the course of this stream till we came near Wady Khar, a village picturesquely situated on the sloping side of an isolated hill. In this place we unloaded, and, together with our donkeys and the family of our host, occupied to my discomfort one and the same shed. Long before daylight I roused my friend Ali, and ordered him to get ready for our departure. He was not at all pleased with this early summons, and guessing the cause of my impatience, he growled in a gruff voice, ‘ If you cannot endure these things, why didn’t you provide yourself with a sack to creep in ? ’ I told him that his advice came too late, and that I was determined to load. ‘ Load,’ he replied, ‘ yes, indeed, if you want to be killed by robbers, or by a false step on the ascent of Mount Harass, you may load ; I don’t like to die, and so shall sleep.’ Thus terminated our colloquy, and my angry donkey-driver soon again gave unmistakable evidence that he abided by his word. The night at last yielded to the dawn of morning, and we set forward on our perilous and difficult journey. We were already several hundred feet above the level of the sea, and now every step that we took, every hill that we climbed, brought us into higher and more superb sceneries. Alps piled upon Alps uprose in majestic grandeur wherever the eye gazed. Here the towering summit of a lofty rock ; there the unfathomable depth of a frightful precipice. Here stands a mountain covered from its base to its highest peak with a forest of coffee-trees ; there a confused mass of hills, out-topping each other in beautiful variety, wave with the gigantic stalk of the Durra (millet) ; and yonder, towards the east, the vision is bound by the grim heights, which, in days of yore, defended the capital of Queen Sheba’s empire. To scale pile after pile of these mighty ramparts was a most exhausting task, and both we and our animals were continually obliged to stop and gasp for breath. At two p.m. we reached Safon, a beautiful town, situated on one of the projecting limbs of Mount Harass. I had a letter of introduction to Yehya Ameira, the chief of the Jews ; but I believe it was more owing to the few Hebrew sentences I addressed to him, than to the letter, that I got a hearty and cordial welcome. The report that a man had arrived who spake Hebrew, and yet was no Jew—dressed like a Mahommedan, and yet despising the Koran—caused a general sensation, and young and old, women

and children, flocked to the house to see me. They were all anxious to know the land of my birth, age, creed, family, parentage, &c. The object of my journey, more than anything else, excited their incredulity. To care for the outcast Jew, to pity his desolation, and to yearn for his peace and eternal happiness, were things they derided as mere inventions to veil my true character. But I showed them our books, and the sight of these insignia of my calling, banished every spark of distrust, and in a few minutes we became as intimate as friends of many years. They were now quite frank and unreserved in their intercourse with me; in fact the very idea that I had crossed deserts and seas to seek their good, produced a feeling of gratitude, which won their ear to all I said. We remained together till evening prayers, and then adjourned to the synagogue, which was in my host's house. The prayers being ended, I left the corner in which I had been sitting, and stepping into the centre of the room, addressed a most rapt and devout audience. The topics on which I touched were—the unity and harmony between the Old and New Testament—the perfection of God—His holiness, purity, and unbounded love. I then expatiated on the excellencies of the Christian religion, the wisdom that framed it, the love that executed it, and the benefits bestowed by it. This language, which stripped their self-righteous spirit of its hopes, and their vaunting merits of all confidence, did not elicit any marks of disapproval; they felt the truth of my words, and their own hearts responded to the declaration, that sin had driven them from their country, alienated them from their God, and reduced them to the suffering and misery which has been their lot for so long a period; and these striking facts, not only appealed to their understanding, but, as I could perceive, also awed and touched their souls. In the evening, upwards of thirty individuals, headed by their Chacham, assembled in my room. It was an interesting sight to see these poor, secluded victims of Mahomedan intolerance, squatted round a pale and dim light, either reading the New Testament, or listening to the missionary. They had many questions to ask me, and some of considerable import, such as, whether those who had never heard of Christ could be charged with unbelief? whether the Bible was the only revelation from God? and whether a pious and devout life could not procure pardon and forgiveness of sin? We remained together till midnight, and even then, so reluctant were they to leave, that several continued in the room, where, wrapt in their talith, or garment of fringes, they slept soundly, till the servant of the synagogue summoned them to prayers."

At this village, Mr. Stern first began his ministry among the Arabian Jews. Safon contained a population of about fifty Jewish families. Sheik Dai was governor of this part of the country, and he allowed the Jews to carry on their daily avocations without

molestation. As Mr. Stern advanced into the interior, the social prospect became more saddening.

“My acquaintances at Safon did not at all approve of my travelling alone through the mountains with a Mahomedan, and in obedience to their advice, I engaged Eliyahu, a shrewd and courageous Jew, who was well known on the road; and was, as he in true Arab style assured me, quite ready to shed his blood in my defence. Two youths from Sanaa also attached themselves to our party, so that altogether I had now four travelling companions. The morning was fresh and cool, and a few light and fleecy clouds hanging on the mountains, prognosticated that we should for one day at least be delivered from the fierce and burning sun. Our path, as on the previous day, threaded up and down dizzy heights, where a false step, or the shifting of a stone, would have hurled the unfortunate wayfarer into ravines of immeasurable depth. My dress, which consisted of a coarse shirt and muslin turban, greatly facilitated my steps, though at the same time, it also exposed me to the fervid rays of the cloud-defying sun. In my feet I endured the acutest sufferings, for, being obliged to walk barefoot, the sharp rocks and prickly shrubs pierced and lacerated them all over. I had shoes and sandals with me, but the former, my companions assured me, would cause suspicion that I was a Turk—and a Turk is a lawful prey to every mountaineer,—and the latter were so clumsily made, that even on level ground the thongs cut the toes, and made the blood run profusely. We passed numerous parties of armed Bedouins, whom I invariably saluted with a ‘Salaam Aleikoum,’ a compliment which was returned by a ‘Salaam ya Dervish.’ Some of the sceneries we traversed were grand and dazzling; but who can admire the beauties of nature when seen through eyes dimmed by toil and fatigue? To me every object had lost its attraction, save the gushing rill, which tumbled down the rocky chasm, and afforded luxurious draughts to my parched and feverish tongue. My Jewish guide, and the two youths who had gone with me in advance of the donkeys, neither felt the heat nor the labour of the numerous ascents; they had all their days been accustomed to climb these giddy precipices, and practice had imparted to their legs the agility and endurance of the mountain goat.

“By mid-day we came to *Sachara*, a little town divided into two separate villages, one inhabited by Jews and the other by Moslems. We of course went to the former, and proceeded straight to the house of Yehya Hocohen, the head of the synagogue. Eliyahu, to whom the long walk had given a zest for his breakfast, bolted into the doorway, and at the top of his voice proclaimed that a great Chacham was come—a title which at once secured me a kind reception, and a kiss on the hand from every inmate. A breakfast of hot bread was soon set before us; and whilst we were eating our frugal meal, the report that a rabbi had arrived spread through the village,



and brought all who were at home to our entertainer's house. They were quite amazed to hear that I was a believer in Jesus of Nazareth, and prompted by a natural curiosity, I was unanimously requested to give an account of my faith. I cheerfully complied with this wish, and in a long discourse explained to them how Christianity was only mature Judaism, and the sacrifices of the Law merely types of the sacrifice of Christ. 'Is there, then, no atonement for sin without a Redeemer? and are the prayers, castigations and sufferings of the Jews all in vain?' interrogated several voices. 'Yes, my brethren, they are in vain, if substituted in the place of God's declared purpose of mercy; and it would be a libel on Scripture, and an unpardonable disbelief in the Messiah, were we to seek, in the pride and self-sufficiency of the heart, that pardon and salvation which Divine mercy alone can bestow.' I distributed several tracts and New Testaments, which were accepted with the greatest gratitude.

"We remained at Sachara till past noon, and then one hour more brought us to *Menakha*, the principal town in Mount Harass. Here my lodging was immediately invaded by a savage and lawless set of Arabs, so that the poor Jews, whom, through Eliyahu, I had invited to visit me, could not even enter. At sunset these noisy intruders, to my infinite satisfaction, went to the mosque; and myself and the Jews being left alone, a solemn and important discussion ensued. 'You are right,' was the remark to what I had said, 'the frown of Jehovah is indeed resting upon us; for why are we despoiled and trodden down? Why are we abused and derided, the slave of the wild Arab, and the scorn of their impure offspring? Are we not descendants of Abraham? and does not the blood of prophets and martyrs circulate through our veins? Oh God! Oh merciful God! if it is indeed that our sins merit the anguish and pain we suffer, do thou in thine infinite compassion unfold unto our dark intellects what is now hidden, and make clear what is now so mysterious!' This touching ejaculation awakened my deepest sympathy, so that with yearning solicitude I entreated them to seek the aid of the Holy Spirit, whose power alone was effectual in enlightening the mind, in subduing the heart, and in disposing the will and affections to rest on a Father's love, and to depend for salvation on a Son's sacrifice. Whilst we were thus conversing, there was suddenly a loud knock at the door, and upon removing the bolt, in stepped a respectable Mahommedan, accompanied by two attendants. 'I am glad, Abdallah,' said he, that you have safely reached Menakha, may God still watch over you, and guide you in peace to Sanaa.' Having replied to this friendly salutation, my visitor, who was the brother of Ali Zarkhee, the most wealthy merchant in the province of Sanaa, informed me that there was a rumour in the town, that a Nazarene had arrived laden with books and money, to upset the religion of the country; 'and this intelligence,' continued my kind friend, 'if it reaches the Bedouins—and reach them it will before to-morrow's

sunset—renders your onward journey to Sanaa utterly impossible. This information, which the Jews, on whose fidelity I could rely, corroborated, entirely disconcerted my plans ; and, reluctant as I felt, necessity compelled me, notwithstanding my two hard days' travel and the wounded and inflamed state of my feet, to start before day-dawn. My visitor generously told me that he would send some of his own Bedouins to conduct me to the next stage ; and there were still a few hours wanting to the appointed time, when two tawny and fierce-looking Arabs roused me from my restless slumber. My new companions were genuine sons of the desert—men of hardy, nervous and sinewy frame, who could bear any privations, and submit to every hardship. For clothing they had evidently a supreme contempt ; a tattered piece of linen, confined round the waist by a leathern girdle, in which were stuck a curved dagger and pointed knife, supplied all their external wants. On the head they wore nothing, except their own hair, which fell long and matted over their bronzed necks. It was still dark when, under the escort of these wild and formidable beings, we resumed our journey. Our route lay through a district which abounded with the most lovely and charming landscapes ; fields and trees, mountains covered with woods, and valleys with rank grass and sweet herbs ; close to the path over which you painfully toil, rolls a sparkling rivulet, which murmurs and foams whenever the trunk of a tree, or a piece of loose rock, impedes its progress ; above you hang black and frightful precipices, under whose shade the traveller dreads to loiter ; and yonder, farther than your vision can reach, towers summit after summit of a bold, undefinable mountain range. Everything is grand and beautiful, only man vile, base, degraded, and repulsive. Four hours' good march brought us into a ravine, formed by two grim cliffs, which appeared to have been severed by some tremendous convulsion of nature. This was the most dangerous spot on our road, and it was indeed a place suited to the dark and fell crimes which of late years it witnessed. Our guard was now exceedingly uneasy, and their eyes glanced suspiciously towards every moving branch or rustling leaf. Now and then one or the other would whisper a few words of confidence in my ears ; but though alone, in an unknown country, and among a savage fanatical people, I felt no dread of the robber and murderer ; 'the eternal God' was my refuge, and His 'everlasting arms,' as ever, my support.

"We at last cleared this dreaded ravine, and proceeding an hour farther, espied, on the broad eminence of a lofty mountain, the little town of Uhr, famous for the abundance and excellence of its coffee.

"I was entirely worn out with this day's laborious and toilsome march, still my spirit did not yield to the fatigues and exhaustion of my frame ; in fact, the very idea of being so near the goal of my travels, and the prospect of introducing the Gospel where the



shinings of its light have never yet been seen, amidst all my sufferings, buoyed me up with hope, and cheerfully carried me through every physical trial.

“The Sheikh of Uhr, to whom I had brought a letter of recommendation, was very profuse in the offers of his services, and with much self-complacency at his own piety, he assured me that it always afforded him pleasure to see a Hajee. I told him that I was no Hajee; and though this unexpected reply discomfited him a little, he checked his disappointment, and said, ‘Whatever you are, whether dog of a Jew, or an infidel Nazarene, you are welcome, and during your stay here I will protect you.’ Whilst we were engaged in this polite dialogue, Eliyahu, who had been sitting in the street, was chained and thrust into prison. I asked the worthy chief why he allowed his people to violate the rules of hospitality, by maltreating a stranger’s servant, and one, too, who had the honour to enjoy his favour? He made a flimsy excuse, and muttering a half audible curse, in which I came in for a good share, ordered his men to bring the Jew. Pale, famished, bound in chains, and trembling with terror, poor Eliyahu, whose sole crime consisted in his having fled from the heartless tyranny of pitiless persecutors—conducted between two Arabs, staggered into my lodging. His first impulse was to throw himself before me, but a significant glance changed his purpose; and in a moment, in despite of his fetters, he was on his knees before the Sheikh, begging and praying for his release. The request was, after many humiliating reproaches, granted; though I was obliged to do penance for the wrongs he had endured; as during the greater part of the night he kept me awake, by dilating on the cruel disposition of the Mahommedans, and the ill-treatment of his people.

“This little incident rapidly circulated among the Jews in the adjacent villages, and numbers came on the following day to see this unexpected friend of their nation. I had lengthened conversations with the majority of them; and though every word I said, every truth I urged, was opposed to their religious prejudices, still they all eagerly listened to the foreign teacher, and readily inclined to the doctrines he pressed upon them. In passing through the market, where numerous Jews had exposed their scanty wares (it being market-day), I was agreeably surprised to see some stealthily reading our tracts, and others quietly discussing the merits of our faith. Poor, despised people; my heart bleeds when I think on the anguish to which you are doomed, and the sufferings to which you must submit! Your lot on earth is grievous and painful—your prospect of heaven cheerless and uncertain. That Divine Messiah, whose meekness and resignation sheds light and consolation on the hard and rugged path of the Christian, is unknown to you; nor can you cherish those hallowed and sublime visions, which, even in the very depth of affliction and misery, whisper comfort to the despairing, and rest to the troubled!

“On the third morning after my arrival at Uhr, came a messenger from Ali Zarkhee, at Sanaa, who brought me the pleasing intelligence that I could proceed to my destination. The Sheikh and another chief also received notes, in which, as they told me, my safety was entrusted to their charge. All things being thus satisfactorily arranged, it was agreed that I should stay over night at Beit-el-Nash, a village two hours’ distance, and from thence, accompanied by a faithful and trusty man, go on the next day to Sanaa. The Sheikh himself having a house at Beit-el-Nash, escorted me to that place, and under the pretence of friendship, for which I had to part with my last two dollars, entertained me under his own roof.

“With sunrise we quitted this miserable village, and once more pursued our weary way. The country from hence onward, looked far different to the charming and lovely scenery which characterizes the mountains over which we had been travelling; no longer the coffee and banana plantations clothed the hills, and imparted a luxurious and refreshing fragrance to the heated atmosphere; grim, dreary, and frowning, rose the barren and naked rocks, reflecting from their rugged and flinty sides a fire, that made the blood boil and the perspiration stream. We encountered several armed parties, who, unlike those on Mount Harass, scrutinized me very closely, and I dare say, if my Bedouin guide had not always forestalled their inquiries, by telling them that I was a wandering Dervish, their rapacious eyes would not so easily have turned from me. Late at noon, we ascended the last rocky range that separated us from Sanaa, and having accomplished this task, as by enchantment, we beheld before us one of the most ancient and famous cities, with its quaint palaces and gardens, tapering minarets and glittering cupolas, rising like an oasis, out of the midst of desolation and death. Here, before we made our descent into the plain, we halted awhile, in the shade of an old decayed stable, built on a ledge of rock—a pleasure in which we could not have indulged on the following day, as the pass was then occupied by three hundred of the Beni Jebar, who committed the most outrageous atrocities on all who had the misfortune to fall into their hands.

“Whilst we and our donkeys were enjoying a rest, Eliyahu went in advance to procure me a lodging; and it was quite an unanticipated delight to find, at the gate of the Jewish town, a number of people waiting to conduct me to the house of More Saida Mansoor, one of their principal rabbis. The old, grey-bearded man, had himself descended into the street, and, in the presence of crowds of Jews, he gave me a truly oriental welcome.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SANAA.

*“ Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,  
How shall ye flee away and be at rest ?  
The wild dove hath her nest, the fox her cave,  
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave.”*

This was the strain in which Byron, who was in every respect a man of the world, wrote of the ancient people of God. So dark were the clouds that incessantly hung over their lives and prospects, and so terrible the sufferings through which they had, without ceasing, to pass; that he, unconscious of the light with which prophecy illumines their future, saw nothing but the grave as the termination of all their tribulations. Yet, these tribulations are among the most plain and incontrovertible evidences of the truth and inspiration of the Word of God. The people from whom the whole Bible came—the people to whom belonged prophets, apostles and teachers,—the people out of whom, “as concerning the flesh, Christ came;”—this people have become “an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations.” Their national rejection of Him, who is the only Refuge from the wrath to come, explains their sad history. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” But the time will come when they shall remember these things “among all the nations, whither the Lord their God hath driven” them; when “they shall return unto the Lord their God;” and they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn over their transgressions. Then the sorrows and desolations, of which this history gives such frequent illustrations, shall cease; “the Lord will bring them again into the land which their fathers possessed,” and Jerusalem

shall once more be established, and become a praise in the earth. Of the town and region into which the traveller had now entered, Mr. Stern wrote as follows :—

“ Sanaa, which, according to the Jews, is the Uzal of Gen. x. 27, contains forty thousand inhabitants; 18,000 of these are Hebrews and 22,000 Moslemin. The time when the Jews first settled there is involved in uncertainty: their own tradition asserts that, during the invasion of Palestine by Nebuchadnezzar, they fled to Egypt, and subsequently wandered farther southwards, till they came to the mountains of Arabia, where they permanently established their homes. The fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, and the picturesqueness of the scenery, rapidly augmented the little colony by attracting fresh emigrants, who, on those distant plains and woody slopes, sought that peace and quiet which their own fated and distracted country no longer afforded. Inured to hardships, and nursed in war, these foreign colonists, by a dexterous application of their prowess and valour, soon gained an ascendancy over the wild tribes by whom they were surrounded; and the exiles from Judea in a very short time reigned, where at first they had only been tolerated. For nearly six hundred years the power and religion of the Hebrews predominated throughout Arabia; trade, under their sway, increased; agriculture flourished, and the flocks and herds multiplied on every tract of pasture land; but a fierce hurricane, that subverted thrones and made the earth heave with throes unutterable, was brooding in the atmosphere.

“ A solitary merchant, whilst pursuing his lonely path through the sandy desert, and musing on the daring exploits and fabulous traditions of his ancestors, conceived the notion of reforming his country and the religion of his people. The fire of enthusiasm, kindled in the boundless plain where nothing interposes to check the roving imagination, was fed in the silent retreat of a cave in Mount Harass. The design, formed in poverty and persecution, grew stronger as fortune smiled, and converts were won. Success enhanced the enterprise, and in a few years the luxurious Khosroes of Persia, and the imbecile successors of Constantine, trembled in their marble palaces at the name of a distant Arab enthusiast. Mecca, Medina, the strongholds of Chaibar, and all the provinces along the shores of the Red Sea, yielded to the scimitars of the ruthless conqueror. The Jews were the first victims of that mighty power, which was destined to carry desolation into the fairest abodes of Europe. Throughout Arabia, the sword or the kelema was their only option. No capitation tax—no passive spoliation—no galling slavery could procure immunity for the stubborn unbelievers in the holy land of Islam. Strange, that, after such severe enactments, such unsparing proscriptions, such wholesale butcheries, which often converted the villages and towns of the Jews into charnel-houses, where young and old, the man with grey beard, and the

maiden in full bloom of years, ended their unhappy existence ; strange, I say, when we reflect on all these torrents of blood, that there should still be in every valley and mountain-range of Arabia, vast multitudes of this undying and imperishable race. Sanaa alone, as I was informed by the rabbis, who do not exaggerate their number, contains 3,500 adult males ; and in the whole of Yemen, from Saad, the ancient Diklah, in the north, to the barren rocks that abut on the Indian ocean in the south, there are upwards of 200,000 of this loathed and wronged people. In Sanaa they have eighteen synagogues, some of which, like the Kaneesa Beit Alushta, are spacious and solid buildings. These places of worship are under the control of the Beth Din, who also appoint rabbis, collect the taxes, and settle every dispute and litigation that may arise in their community. Formerly these rulers were generally men renowned for wisdom and integrity, wealth and influence ; but an accumulation of troubles, and a long period of racking care, fear and anxiety, have lowered their character, and stripped them of those virtues for which they were once so distinguished.

“ The Jews at Sanaa, and in the whole of Yemen, notwithstanding their miseries and oppressions, which invariably crush the spirit and blunt the energies, are still the most active, industrious, and hard-working people in the country. Debarred, by the enmity of the Arabs, from cultivating the soil, and by their rapacious disposition from engaging in the pursuits of commerce, they have become the monopolizers of every useful art and every branch of trade. In walking through a bazaar, it is unnecessary to inquire for the part occupied by the Jews : you have only to follow the sound of the anvil, and the vibration of the weaver’s shuttle, and you may be sure to find the spot you are in search of. Rich and influential men their community does not possess, nor are they, as I noticed, much bent on the acquisition of wealth. Poor people ! they know that silver and gold would only aggravate their burdens, without increasing their comforts ; and they do not, therefore, long for treasures which the Governor, his myrmidons, or the Bedouin of the desert, could at any moment seize with impunity. Poverty, despair, and prostrating want, are their unhappy lot ; and as if the misery of years had silenced the blessings of hope, they are resigned and contented if by the sweat of their brow they can eke out the means to satisfy the wants of a weary life. In the market, in the khans, or in the streets ; wherever one wanders, the haggard, wan and careworn Jew is the most pitiable object. You look in his face, and you read in the knitted brow the wrestlings of a wounded and aching heart—you observe his walk, and you see in his creeping steps the agonizing fear which pervades his scathed and shattered frame ; even his squalid rags, unturbaned head, and daggerless leather belt, all these mark the despised and trodden down Jew.

“ During the reign of the Imams, who boasted their descent from the family of Hoschem, the ancestors of Mahommed, the posi-



tion of the Jews was still tolerable ; but when, three years ago, the power of these temporal and spiritual chiefs came to an end, by the murder of Yehya ibu Mahommed, their last safeguard vanished—their last shelter was swept away.

“The new era of liberty which burst the feeble restraints of law, and gave free scope to every fierce and dark passion, was immediately inaugurated by the abandonment of the Jewish town to the remorseless cruelty of a dissolute and bloodthirsty mob. For eight days the place was the scene of atrocities and crimes, of rapine and plunder, too heartrending to describe, and too humiliating for human nature to peruse. Unbefriended sufferers ! Unhappy exiles ! no wonder that ye yearn for the advent of the Redeemer—no wonder that ye sigh for the close of the dismal night in which you are shrouded.

“The house which was to be my home for a few weeks, stood at the corner of one of the narrow and unwholesome lanes which, in labyrinthine confusion, intersect the Jewish quarter. On one side, it was joined by dwellings, which, from their external appearance, must once have been the homes of affluence and ease, though now they bore many marks of ruin and neglect ; on the other, over a wide surface, lay scattered the debris of buildings, which, three years ago, were wrested from their lawful occupants, and became a prey to a savage and fanatical mob. The old rabbi, who, from an upper window, pointed out to me this desolate spot, in spite of all his efforts, appeared unable to control the stifling emotion which shook his frame, as he dilated on all the sufferings, all the wrongs, and all the bitter struggles of his people ; and I was quite appalled, in gazing on him, to see a face that a few minutes before had been calm and placid, suddenly betraying intense passion and unutterable grief. I felt my deepest sympathy awakened when I looked on this aged and care-worn teacher, and laying my hand on his shoulder, I said, ‘My dear rabbi, it is true ! alas, too true ! that your lot is a hard and painful one ! but is the Lord angry without a cause ? Do not your calamities and woes tell you that there is something wrong in your belief ? that there is an anathema upon your race ? Here, take the Bible in your hand, unfold page after page, and does not God speak to you in accents of the profoundest love ? Does He not say, ‘Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee ?’ And can you suppose that He has ceased to be gracious to His own chosen people, or that the fountains of mercy are dried up for the seed of Abraham ? No ; you know the cause of your miseries—you know the guilt for which you are punished ! ‘Hold ! hold !’ he exclaimed in a hoarse and tremulous voice, ‘I cannot discuss these matters—I cannot answer the arguments you advance !’

“On returning to the sitting-room, which was also my host’s study and dormitory, I found the room literally crowded with Jews, who had come to see me. After the salutation, which consisted in kissing the hand, or, as the rabbis did, in a familiar embrace, the



conversation, that had been limited to a few complimentary phrases, became more free and unrestrained. The object of my journey, as usual, interested all ; and upon being told that I had brought them New Testaments, a distinct whisper ran through the closely-shouldered assembly, 'He has come to make us Noyrim' (Christians). I instantly caught these words, and turning to the numerous countenances that were riveted on me, I began to expound to them that faith, of which scarcely one knew more than its mere name. The subjects I first touched were the various prophecies, which, like a beacon of hope through the mists of sin and corruption, unfolded to the believers of old the promise of a coming redemption ; I next turned to the character of Christ, His sublime teachings, superhuman miracles, and infinite holiness : and, lastly, I dilated on the Saviour's meek death, resurrection and glorious ascension—the pledges of His Messiahship, and the guarantees of a blessed immortality. There was a breathless silence among the eager listeners, not a sound was heard nor a word uttered ; they all appeared amazed and confounded at the sublime truths I set before them ; even the rabbis, who doubted my words, and differed from the views I expressed, sat motionless and absorbed, as if the pulse of life had suddenly been arrested. It was an affecting sight (and these few hours amply compensated me for all the toils I had undergone), to see a multitude of men, many of whom had already reached the verge of life, gathered round the Missionary, and receiving from his lips an account of that Saviour, to whose claims, prejudice and ignorance had so long blinded them. The heat of the room had induced numbers to throw off their upper garment, and as they sat thus almost naked, save a cloth round their waist, and had their dark and sorrowful eyes bent upon me, I felt that no sacrifice was too great—no hardship too painful, if it could only smooth the rugged present, and lighten the gloomy future, of these men.

"It was midnight before all retired, and even then, had my strength been equal to the task, a fresh audience, that had lingered about the house, would readily have taken possession of the vacated room."

Mr. Stern was not allowed to continue his residence in the Jewish quarter. His letter of introduction made a demand upon the hospitality of the Moslems ; and his own wishes were overruled by their determination, to have him under their own control.

"On awaking in the morning, from a sleep that had been broken and disturbed by several noisy inmates who occupied the same chamber, I was told that Ali Zarkhee, and two other Moslem magnates, had sent to announce their intention of visiting me. The three Arabs soon made their appearance, and, as if I had no voice in the matter, they immediately ordered my little luggage to be removed to the Mahommedan town. I did not feel quite disposed

to acquiesce in their unceremonious arrangement ; but my visitors overruled every objection, by assuring me that in the Moslem city, without any danger to myself, the Jews would have free access to me, whilst if I remained on the Koa-el-Yehad, my life would be in imminent jeopardy.

“The new lodging to which my friends conducted me, was in the Khan of Ali Zarkhee, a spacious and massive building, situated in the very centre of the market-place, and surrounded on three sides by long lines of bazaars, where Jews and Mahommedans were all day congregated. Before the gate of the Khan many idle loiterers, and blustering coffee-drinkers, were assembled when we arrived ; they bowed most respectfully to my Mahommedan companions, but evinced a strong inclination, to have a little fight for the faith with the Christian.

“Before I was quite installed in my abode, or had sufficient time to humanize the mud-floored room, the Governor’s brother, several sheikhs, merchants and mullahs, honoured me with their company. The mullahs were of course inquisitive about my creed, and with sedate and grave countenances, they asked me many foolish and puerile questions. What evidently most perplexed their acute intellects, was the origin of evil ; and they nodded a gracious approval when I told them that evil and good were both overruled to accomplish a wise and benevolent end ; just like the sun, which killed one and conferred benefits on thousands, so sin ruined the careless, and displayed God’s love and goodness to the pious and holy. The next topic was the atonement of Christ ; and here, though I touched the most vulnerable points of a Mahommedan’s religious prejudice, to my surprise they remained all very quiet, and neither by word nor sign, manifested a favourable or adverse opinion on this all-important truth.

“A great number of Jews, who, during my conversation with the Mahommedans, had been standing outside the door, on their departure quitted this humiliating position, and entered my room. They all expressed themselves highly gratified in having heard a Christian defend, before believers in the Koran, the revelation made to Moses and the Prophets ; though, at the same time, accused as they have always been to the cruel and remorseless disposition of their oppressors, they trembled for my safety, when they reflected on their own precarious existence. And now, having faithfully warned me of every impending danger, they produced the tracts I had distributed on the preceeding evening, and began to discuss their contents. As with most Jews, their chief difficulty was the doctrine of the Trinity. ‘Everything that you have told us we can believe ; thus we will admit that Jesus was born of a virgin—that He performed many miracles—that he taught excellent doctrines—that He toiled, suffered and died, all this we can believe ; but that the Deity should make atonement for man, this is an enigma which it is impossible for us to understand.’ This great truth,

which they considered so repugnant to reason, and so derogatory to the Deity, now formed the theme of a long and solemn discussion. There was many a doubtful eye fastened on the inspired volume, when I opened the same ; but their scepticism softened as I pointed out passage after passage where this sublime doctrine is positively declared. Their incredulity, like that of most Jews, was founded on the coarse and erroneous notion, that the faith of the Christian was quite distinct from that of the Jew, and that the Saviour whom he adored as a God was nothing more than a frail man. That Christianity had its germ in Judaism, and that the Messiah whom we worship was the same Divine Being who revealed Himself to the prophets and saints, had never entered their minds ; and they were therefore quite startled, nay awed, when they perceived this great difficulty cleared up, and the mystery solved. The veil thus taken from their hearts, all their vague and futile notions yielded to better influences, and I am convinced, if the dread of their Mahommedan task-masters had not, like a menacing spectre, floated before their minds, not one among my audience would have left the room without avowing his faith in the crucified Redeemer. As it was, two remained, and these, with tears streaming down their brown wan cheeks, pressed the New Testament to their quivering lips, and in accents of intense earnestness ejaculated ; ‘ Jesus, thou gracious Redeemer of souls, pity our ignorance, and forgive our sins ! ’ They remained with me till evening, and then and there, in that gloomy room, which had so often rung with the boisterous voices of wild Bedouins, could now be heard the sighs and groans of two despised Israelites, as the Missionary commended them to the mercy of that Saviour, whose pardon and forgiveness they had so affectingly implored.”

An introduction to the Governor of Sanaa was the next formidable step, in which the Missionary had to take his part. To combine faithfulness to his Divine Master, and respect to the opinions and wishes of this autocrat, required more than human wisdom.

“The same evening, at ten o’clock, I went, together with Ali Zarkhee, to pay my respects to Sheikh Achmed-el-Kheima, the Governor of Sanaa. The distance from the Khan to the fort or palace is about ten minutes’ walk ; but as my feet were still smarting from the fatigues of the journey, it occupied us nearly half an hour. Ali Zarkhee, on whose arm I was leaning for support, did not mind the slowness of my movements ; he had been present at the discussion with the mullahs in the morning, and fearing lest I might, by some unguarded expression, rouse the passion of the Chief, the tardy walk afforded him ample time to forewarn me of all the consequences that might accrue from a hasty word.

“The castle, which stands at the foot of Tebal Makoom, like the town itself, was enveloped in perfect darkness. At the gate, an Arab sentinel, stretched on the bare ground, more obstructed than guarded the entrance. We passed, unchallenged, this sleeping figure, and guided by our extended arms, we groped our way to another gate. Here on the left were several small buildings (I believe the prisons), one of which was occupied by half a dozen Bedouins, who were indulging in the fumes of the bouree. They salaamed us, asked whether I was the Christian Dervish, and once more puffed away their favourite weed. Leaving these grim and sullen smokers to the enjoyment of their pipes, I followed in the rear of my friend (who was quite at home in this region of night), through several narrow and loathsome passages—which, even in the day-time, owing to the formidable obstructions from crumbling walls and heaps of rotten rubbish, it must be dangerous to traverse—till the pale glimmer of lights, and the subdued sound of voices, indicated that we had reached the great man’s official residence. The entrance to this principal part of the palace was through a low door, which appeared unguarded; but on creeping in, a closer inspection revealed, in a recess of the wall, the black and ungainly forms of several armed men. One of these unprepossessing forms, on seeing Ali Zarkhee, threw down his matchlock, and seizing an earthen oil-lamp—the only light in the place—without uttering a word, conducted us up a winding stone staircase, into the presence of the redoubted Chief. The room, unlike the reception-hall of other Eastern rulers, displayed nothing of wealth or luxury; on the contrary, the bare walls, overhung with gaudy chintz, and divans covered with old faded carpets, gave it a shabby and ragged appearance. The Governor—an olive-coloured Arab, in whose lustreless eyes and sunken cheeks vice had traced her indelible characters,—surrounded by about a score of Sheikhs and mullahs, was squatted in the corner, on one of these seats, deeply engaged in conversation. At my entrance he stopped, and making a slight inclination with the head—a condescension I did not expect—extended to me his hand, and in a kind tone said, ‘Welcome, ya Sheikh-el-Nazarane.’ He now asked me about the road—whether I liked Sanaa, and if there were such a beautiful town in Room, *i.e.*, Europe? Having replied to these and similar questions, the conversation turned upon the new topics which my work among the Jews, and the difference of our faith, afforded. The mullahs, after venting their zeal on the unbelief of the Jews, in a long and flowery speech, gave a description of the beauties and excellencies, pleasures and delights, their Koran offered to the faithful; and, as if their epicurean heaven swayed and animated all their senses, they said to me compassionately, ‘What reward does your Angeel, *i.e.*, Gospel, hold out to its adherents?’ ‘Our creed,’ I replied, ‘like yours, has also its hopes and promises, joys and consolations; like yours, it tells us of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the final



judgment of mankind ; but it does not stop here, for it further informs us that man is a fallen creature—that he has to struggle with the corruption of sin—and that unredeemed by an Almighty Saviour, he can never be brought back to the favour of his offended God. Now this mere declaration of our guilty and rebel state, unaccompanied by an assurance of pardon and mercy, would either sink us into despair, or drive us into the sea of doubt and scepticism. This the Divine Being, from whom the Angeel emanates, foreknew ; and, to remove all vain speculations and all self-created fancies, around which the heart might cling for hope, our religion, in announcing to us our ruin and misery, through the seduction of sin, also brings us the cheering tidings of our reconciliation and redemption, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. This grand truth, O ye wise men !' (addressing the mullahs) 'is the basis of our faith, and the source of our happiness ; and however imperfect our gratitude and devotion to God may be, for all the blessings He has conferred upon us, the yearning desire of every true Nazarene already here on earth is, to be invested with that purity and holiness which are the characteristics of the inhabitants of heaven.' There was a kind of discontented murmur when I finished the address, of which the above is an epitome ; but I could perceive, by the compressed lips of some, and the menacing scowl of others, that the words of life and truth had not been uttered in vain.

"At midnight the assembly separated, except Ali Zarkhee and myself, who, at the request of the Governor, remained. My friend did not much admire this detention, from which he expected something ill-boding for me ; happily, his suspense was only of short duration, for the Sheikh, so soon as the door closed on his visitors, invited me to a seat near him, and we entered into an unrestrained, friendly converse. We had been talking about half-an-hour, when a servant came into the room, and said, 'Sheikh, there is a tumult in the market-place.' At these words the countenance of the Governor, who thought there was an insurrection, became flushed with intense passion, and grasping the arms which hung on the wall, hastened, together with some of his attendants, to the scene of disturbance. This unexpected intelligence alarmed us greatly, but more particularly my friend, who was quite undecided whether he should go and assist in quelling the supposed popular commotion, or whether he should remain in the palace and wait for more correct information. Our consultation was cut short by the entrance of one of the so-called soldiers. We immediately inquired about the cause of the uproar. 'Nothing at all,' replied this supporter of order, 'only two Banians—cursed infidels—have been murdered, and the Sheikh is busy in taking possession of their property.'"

And now, Mr. Stern was engaged, from early morn until late at night, in religious discussions. These did not take the form of angry debate, but eager and anxious consideration of the revelation which

God had given in His Son. The Mahommedans were interested; and often obtruded themselves on the company of the Jews, who thronged the lodgings of the Missionary.

“During this conversation, several mullahs strode into my room. The Jews immediately wanted to get up and leave; but the Mahomedan doctors, to their surprise, quite politely requested them to retain their places, as they had purposely come to hear the arguments they used to combat the doctrines I preached. ‘We have no arguments,’ they timidly replied, ‘to controvert the religion of the Angeel (the Gospel); both our creeds rest their truth on Moses and the Prophets; our only difficulty is the person and work of the Messiah; and if this enigma is satisfactorily solved, the Yehudee is a Nazaranee, and the Nazaranee a Yehudee.’ After this short converse with the Jews, they turned to me, and smilingly inquired whether I did not think that the sword was a far better instrument to make proselytes than all the wisdom and learning of the world? ‘Certainly not,’ rejoined I, ‘for God does not require the revelation He has given to man to be enforced by means opposed to His nature and attributes. His law is a law of love, and wherever it is proclaimed, and wherever it seeks to win disciples, it must elevate and not debase—it must make man free and not a slave—it must change the heart’s faith and not extort an hypocritical lip confession; this our Angeel does, and wherever its message is proclaimed, no sword and no hands reeking with blood are requisite to make converts; its own language is the best pleader of its truth, and its adaptation to our wants the most powerful credential of its Divine origin.’ ‘But did the Nazaranee never compel people to accept their religion?’ demanded they. ‘No; never did true followers of Christ make the Angeel a pretext for persecution; on the contrary, they love their fellow-men and seek to do them good; they pity their ruined condition, and yearn to convey to them the tidings of salvation; but they abhor and shrink from the use of means which are opposed to the God of Love, and incompatible with the Book He has given us.’ In our discussion, which lasted above an hour, I never adverted to the method by which Islamism was promulgated; this my potent visitors noticed—and noticed, I believe, with pleasure; for they were very friendly, and even warned me in going away, not to venture in the streets unaccompanied by Ali Zarkhee, or some other influential person.

“In the afternoon, as I was sitting and conversing with the Jews, three armed Bedouins stalked into my room, and, without any salutation, threw down their guns, and, *sans ceremonie*, squatted themselves uncomfortably close to me. I took no notice of their intrusion, as several armed individuals had visited me before; but finding, after the lapse of a considerable time, that they did not move, I demanded their business. ‘We are soldiers of Sheikh Achmed-el-Kheima,’ was the reply, and charged to watch over



your safety both in your lodging, and also when you go out.' 'The Sheikh,' I rejoined, 'may his life be prolonged, is very kind; but as I am in the zemzar, (*i.e.*, khan of a friend), you must obtain his permission before you can take up your abode on his premises.' They did not appear much inclined to follow my directions, and I had several times to repeat my request before they could be induced to make their exit. The Jews, after their departure, told me that they belonged to the Beni Djedad—a tribe infamous for crimes and atrocities of the most revolting description. As I anticipated, the unsolicited guard did not return; and subsequently, on making inquiries, I discovered that the Governor had not sent them at all, but that they had come of their own accord, in the hope of extorting money from me—a project in which they were foiled by my fearlessness, and the number of Jews around me.

"Soon after the above incident, which, had it not been for the guardian care of our Heavenly Father, might have been attended with serious consequences, the Governor, afraid for my safety, actually sent me several armed Arabs; but one walk in their company convinced me, that it was better to appear to trust, than to suspect the intentions of the people. But the dilemma was, how to get rid of the men without offending their Chief; here, as usual, my kind friend Ali Zarkhee anticipated me; and whilst I was hesitating whether to dismiss them or not, he had already been with the Sheikh and obtained their recall."

Hitherto Mr. Stern had been unable to visit the Jewish synagogues. Every moment of time was occupied by his visitors. Taking advantage of the Jewish Sabbath, at an early hour, accompanied by two Mahommedans, he threaded his way to the Jewish quarter.

"The distance from the Mahommedan to the Jewish town is half an hour's walk. A large tract of waste land, varied by cemeteries and fragments of former dwellings, forms the division. On the Jewish Sabbath this piece of ground is entirely deserted; not a human being is to be seen, not a voice breaks the dull silence; here and there a bird of prey and a savage jackal may be seen prowling among the tombs in search of food; and even they, if their shrill and discordant notes had any signification, seemed to think that no one had a right to intrude on these domains on the seventh day. We set out, I said, with the grey dawn of morning; but in these climes night melts so imperceptibly into day, that the sun was already high above the horizon when we reached the synagogue. Several of my Jewish friends, on hearing that I had come, rushed towards the door, and regardless both of the place and their devotion, shouted with all their might, 'Baruch habah! Baruch habah!' (blessed is he that cometh). The noise and excitement having a little subsided, I took my seat on the carpet of one of the

chiefs, and patiently awaited the conclusion of the service. The last Amen had scarcely been uttered, when young and old, the learned rabbi and the untutored *amhaaretz* (ignorant man), collected around me, and clamorously demanded that I should deliver a *derasha*, i.e., lecture. There was no necessity to repeat the invitation, for the assemblage of immortal beings gathered together in that place of worship, even under far less favourable circumstances, would have impelled me to warn and entreat, to persuade and urge, that they should flee from the wrath to come. My sermon, for such it strictly was, lasted about an hour, and yet, unaccustomed as rabbinical Jews are to restrain their vocal organs when anything is said in a religious discourse that is opposed to their judgment, or militates against their prejudices, there was a breathless silence whilst I spoke, throughout the thronged synagogue. Before I quitted the house of prayer, where there must have been more than five hundred adults (for many from the adjoining congregations had been attracted to the place), I distributed a packet of tracts; and then, accompanied by scores of people, repaired to the house of Solymanel-Nadaff to breakfast. During our repast, the Jews who had gained admittance into the room, entered into a warm and animated discussion on the topics to which I had alluded in my discourse. At two p.m., my Mahommedan friends came to fetch me; but, ere I took my leave, I once more addressed them on the grand question at issue between us. Among other things, I said, 'In a few days you will solemnize the Day of Atonement—a day of humiliation and repentance, of fasting and prayer; but, my dear brethren, can oceans of tears wash away sin? Can anguish of heart procure pardon? The law demands perfection, and pronounces death upon the least deviation from its injunction. Now where is the man that can lay claim to a sinless nature, and to a soul unsullied by the slightest offence? We might traverse the whole universe, penetrate the most secluded sanctuary, and yet everywhere we should find the traces of our fall, and the blighting effects of sin. No, my brethren, there is no merit, as the Prophet saith, in fasting, and no release from guilt through the sacrifice of the lips; the exigencies of our nature require a worthier atonement, and the justice of God an ampler satisfaction. Not the blood of the altar—not even the offspring of my affection, can bring me back to the lost favour of a just Creator, and to the heaven my sin hath forfeited; an atonement commensurate with Divine justice alone could silence the rigour of the broken law—alone could remove the curse from the wide-spreading domains of humanity. This sacrifice the believer in Christ hath, 'for he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities'; and, oh my friends, you who have to struggle with so many painful vicissitudes, and so many adverse circumstances, suffer not the sorrows of the present to drown your concern about the future; on the contrary, in all your afflictions—in all your troubles, and in all the agonies that wring

tears of blood from the eyes—in all such trying circumstances, let faith cherish the image of the Redeemer, and grief, however deep, will be assuaged—despair, however dark, will be brightened.’ The whole audience appeared moved, and I believe many, as they themselves said, will never forget the Sabbath I spent among them.

“My books, whose arrival I had been anxiously anticipating, reached Sanaa on Sunday morning. The caravan had been near the town on the Thursday previous, but on receiving information that the Beni Jebar occupied the mountain-pass, they were obliged to make a detour of nearly seventy miles.

“The news that the books had reached me, caused quite a joyous sensation in the Kaa-el-Yehud; and several of the rabbis, unsolicited, immediately offered me one of the synagogues if I would have them conveyed to their town. To this proposition I at once agreed; but what was my dismay when Ali Zarkhee, to whom I mentioned this plan, told me that an order had come from the Governor, which for the future confined my liberty to the precincts of the khan. ‘And why,’ said I, ‘does the Sheikh imprison a stranger, whom only a few days ago he assured of his friendship and protection?’ ‘You are not imprisoned, Abdallah,’ replied he, ‘nor has the Sheikh ceased to be your friend; no, by Allah, he is anxious about your safety, and this induces him to confine your movements.’ ‘But’ interrogated I, ‘hath aught occurred to warrant such apprehensions?’ ‘Yes’ rejoined he, ‘Cadi Shuganee, a very holy man, and several others, of the mullahs, [may their fathers be cursed,] assert that you have come to make Nazaranee of the Jews, and when you have effected this, to do the same with the Moslemin. Now,’ continued he, ‘you know that a man who attempts such a thing, according to our belief, ought to be killed, and perhaps this would already have been the case with you, were you not my son; but he whom Ali Zarkhee acknowledges as his son, no Shuganee dare molest.’

“The same day at noon, when, as usual, I was engaged in reading and expounding the Word of God to inquiring and truth-thirsting Jews, More Yehya, one of the Chachamim, and a great friend of mine, stepped into the room, and to the surprise of every one, muttered between his closed teeth, ‘cursed blasphemers—impure idolaters—offspring of the evil one,’ &c. Not knowing on whom these and many more gentle epithets were lavished, I exclaimed, ‘More Yehya, why so enraged—why so ill-tempered?’ ‘Enraged and ill-tempered,’ reiterated he, ‘have we not cause? are we not the most wretched and miserable people under the sun? is not our life-blood squeezed out of our hearts drop by drop? You, in your kindness of soul, for which the Lord give you a seat in Paradise; you have come from the country where the sun sets; you have defied the monsters of the deep, and braved the vile Arab of the desert—you have not shunned the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flieth by day; this you have done to comfort Israel, and to fill

with gladness the mourners in Judah ; and now you are here scarcely a week, yet your life is in jeopardy—your books are scarcely unpacked, when the seed of Moloch demand two hundred dollars tribute.’ The fiery and passionate rabbi, after he had given vent to the gushing emotions of his pent-up wrath, in a calmer strain related, that Sheikh Abdallah Chanini and Cadi Shuganee had summoned the Beth Din, *i.e.*, Jewish tribunal, before them, and at the penalty of two hundred dollars enjoined them not to accept any of my books. ‘Did the Beth Din submit to this request?’ inquired I. ‘Yes,’ said he, with a deprecating shrug of his shoulder, ‘what can they do, are we not all slaves to the Goyim, *i.e.*, Gentiles?’ The secretary of the Governor here interrupted our conversation ; and to him, as he was really kindly disposed towards me, I at once made a complaint of the injustice I had experienced that day. The worthy functionary was quite indignant that Abdallah Chanini should impose a tax on books I had brought ; ‘but this is his nature, always grasping—always craving for money. Well, we shall foil him this time, for by the life of Mahomet he shall not have a rupee ; and as to your confinement to the zemzar, I know that this is not pleasant, for I have myself experienced the horrors of a jail, and my heart still throbs whenever I think of the efreed and genii who tormented me within those damp walls ; but the zemzar is not a prison, and it is better to be secure of life in a room, than in danger of the same in the garden of Haroun-el-Reshid.’”

Another interview now took place with the Governor, accompanied by circumstances which were at once unexpected and remarkable.

“My facetious and philosophic scribe had been gone about an hour, when he came back with a message from the Governor, directing me to repair to the palace in the evening, and there, in the presence of the Jewish rabbis who were also invited, he would himself assure us that Abdallah Chanini had no right to interfere with my books, nor to impose a tax on the Jews who were to have them. The excitement, exhausting discussions, and troubles which, during the whole of that painful Sabbath, kept my mind in a continual whirl, made me quite long for the night ; and now, when the stars were already sparkling in the sky, and night invited me to meditation and rest, there comes a summons from the Kaser, and that too from a man whom the interest of my work forced me to obey.

“At nine o’clock, Ali Zarkhee—that true and faithful friend to the lonely Missionary—and myself were wending our way through the hushed and silent streets towards the residence of the Governor. There was a considerable movement near the door, and numerous grim, half-clad figures, could be seen gliding through the darkness of the night towards the building to which we were directing our



steps. I asked my friend what this movement indicated ? 'Nothing at all,' replied he, in a hoarse and low voice, 'the Sheikh has a great assembly.

"We had now reached the entrance, which, like the abodes of all eastern despots, was guarded by several ferocious-looking Arabs. We took no notice of these crouching and motionless figures, but passed the door, mounted the stairs, and without ceremony entered the audience chamber of the Governor. The assembled magnates glared at me with their flashing little eyes, as if I were some dreaded phantom that had long haunted their dreams, and who, suddenly endued with life and speech, had now dropped out of some unknown region into their very midst. No one saluted me except the Sheikh, and two daring chieftains from the mountains, to whom I had given medicines ; they alone extended their hands to touch the hated Christian. 'Well, Sheikh-el-Nazaranee,' said the Governor, 'I hear your books have arrived, and that you are entangled in troubles about the disposal of them. Teyib, teyib, we shall arrange this matter ; but let us first know what the Jews have to say.' At these words the curtain which hung before the door was withdrawn, and five venerable rabbis appeared at the threshold. The poor rabbis, as they thus stood quailing and dejected at the entrance, presented a strange and painful contrast to the bold and resolute Arabs who were lounging on the divans in the room. 'Yahud, do you believe in the books which this mullah of the Nazaranee hath brought ?' demanded the Sheikh. 'We do,' was the brief reply. 'And,' pursued the same harsh voice again, 'will you prize the same like the Torah of Mooza and the Saboor of Daood if they are given to you ?' 'Yes, your Excellency, for the Torah of the Christians is the same as the Torah of the Jews.' 'What do you say,' ejaculated a mullah, whose hideous features were made still more frightful by the quantity of kaad he had stuffed into his capacious mouth, 'what do you say, the Ketab-el-Nazaranee is not different from the Ketab-el-Yahud ? Wollah, these curs imagine that we are all the sons of asses, and don't know the Angeel. Now, listen to me, I have studied, thanks to the Prophet, and understand *ettowheed* (theology) and *we ilm en-nogoom* (astrology). This Book, which is called Angeel, was written by Yooseph, Shimon and Yakoob ; and in its pages it predicts the coming of the Prophet, the destruction of the infidels, and the triumph of Islam. It then proceeds to narrate how your wicked ancestors persecuted Nebi Eesau, and wanted to kill him, and how God deceived them by substituting another person in the place of the Son of Mary. All this is written in the Angeel ; but you are, as the Koran saith, deaf, dumb, and blind, and cannot understand *ettowheed* as I and the faithful (*i.e.*, Mahommedans) do.' The profound wisdom of this fascinating mullah would have excited my risibility, had not his whole language breathed malice and hatred towards the Jews : this roused very different emotions ; and, prompted by a desire both to reprove his ignorance, and to efface

the impression his nonsense had produced, I assured the jabbering sage, that I had no intention to dispute his skill in reading the characters written in the stars of heaven, nor the hidden mysteries veiled under the fine language of the Koran, as I was not sufficiently learned in either ; but as regarded the Gospel, however great a scholar he might be in other matters, this sacred volume had certainly never formed a part of his studies. ‘Why, Abdallah ?’ asked the Sheikh. ‘The reason is simple enough, for, if he had, he would have discovered that our Book was written by the immediate disciples of Christ ; that it taught us the knowledge of sin, the corruption of mankind, and the necessity of an atonement ; that it further tended to enlarge the mind, to purify the heart, to fill us with gratitude to God, and to direct our feeble understanding from the objects of sense to the contemplation of the solemn and glorious realities of heaven.’ ‘Wonderful book ! wonderful book !’ exclaimed the Sheikh, ‘let me have a copy, Abdallah, and give as many copies as you like to the Jews—they have (here he turned to the rabbis) my full consent to accept the same, free of any impost.’ The rabbis now made a profound obeisance and retired. I intended to imitate their example, but was not allowed to do so, as the Governor, and every one else in the room, wanted a description of the fire-carriages and wire-words with which I had bewildered the intellect of the secretary. I endeavoured, by coining new words, to give them some idea of the power of steam and electricity ; but had Watt and Franklin themselves occupied my place, and explained their immortal discoveries, the telegraph and railway would still have been ascribed to the skill of magic, and the genius of the *gente a basso*.

“The toleration of the Governor towards me and my work found no echo in the heart of the bigoted Cadi ; at midnight, and again at the dawn of day, he sent to the rabbis and threatened them with his vengeance if they preferred the Angeel to the Koran, and the teachings of Christ to the doctrines of Mahomed. I purposed to call on him, and by a friendly conversation seek to soften his prejudice against my efforts ; but my Moslem friends would not hear of such a thing ; ‘Shuganee is a holy man,’ they said, ‘and a holy man may do many things we disapprove of, with perfect impunity.’

“Having thus taken every measure to ensure a wide circulation of the Word of God, I did not harass my mind any longer with gloomy and imaginary fears. I had proclaimed the Gospel of salvation ; I had lifted the veil from the errors of the Talmudic creed ; and now whatever obstacles might oppose the written Word, whatever hindrances shackle its free course, I knew the preached Word had reached the heart, I knew that it had melted the iron of the soul ; and I felt confident that no human power—no votary of Islamism, could ever hush the voice, or silence the upbraidings, of the awakened and restless conscience.



“The day after the interview with the Governor, I had an unusual number of Jewish visitors. They did not, as on previous occasions, throng my room; but, as if by some preconcerted plan, they came in parties of three and four; and these, as soon as they had purchased a few books, stealthily crept out again, and with their precious treasure hidden in the ample folds of the talith, hastened away to give place to others. In this manner, unknown to Shuganee and the Beth Din, I sold and circulated two cases of books, which, I feel persuaded, have ere this, cheered many a desponding heart, and solaced many a wounded spirit.”

Among these indigent and struggling Jews, Mr. Stern sold Scriptures to the amount of about £12 sterling. An estimate of the extent of these sales can only be formed by a knowledge of the value of money in these remote regions. A small copper coin, called the *rupee*, is of common use at Sanaa. Six hundred of these are of the value of one shilling. Mr. Stern used to show some of these diminutive coins, and related what was the cost of his two weeks' sojourn at Sanaa. The premises in which he lived, belonged to a Moslem, whose duty it was to provide and prepare his food, and attend to all his other wants. On the eve of his departure, he settled his account with his host, who, on the plea that his own life had been endangered by his giving accommodation to an infidel, and that he expected to be handsomely remunerated, made a demand for twelve hundred rupees, or two shillings, in order to cover all charges. When Mr. Stern's friend, Ali Zarkhee, heard of this, he was intensely indignant at the exorbitant exactions which had been practised upon the Missionary!

The position of Mr. Stern at Sanaa was now becoming one of increasing danger. He also recorded, that considerable risks beset those who had treated him with kindness, and who had listened with interest to his message. It became an imperative necessity that he should retrace his steps.

“I began to make preparations to leave Sanaa. I had now been twelve days in the city, and during the whole of that time, with the exception of a few hours' rest by night, every minute was occupied in preaching the Gospel to Jew and Mahomedan. Among the former, besides the two converts already adverted to, there were several more who felt the converting power of the Gospel, and even desired to be baptized, a request with which their peculiar position forbade me to comply; and among the latter (Mahomedans) the impression produced had evidently shaken the faith of many, though

perhaps their understanding was not quite convinced. One of my Mahommedan visitors, a most respectable merchant, had already to such a degree excited the suspicion of his co-religionists, that in the public market he was most outrageously maltreated and beaten ; and my faithful friend, Ali Zarkhee, together with half a score of other persons, the most potent in the town, were only saved from a similar fate, as he himself wrote to Signor Theophani, at Hodeida, by my unexpected departure. Gladly, indeed, would I have prolonged my stay,—gladly, indeed, would I have continued to preach the Gospel to the perishing souls who flocked around me ; but the public clamour against me began to be too loud and vehement to resist it much longer ; and, as in my own fate I would have involved many Jews and Mahommedans, it became an imperative duty to quit the place.

“The difficulty, however, was, how to get away. Should I retrace the road by which I came, I should certainly fall into the hands of some of the village chiefs, who were engaged in a deadly feud ; and should I go more towards the south, I should encounter the sanguinary Beni Jebar, who occupied every mountain pass. In this perplexity, my confidence in a gracious Providence did not forsake me ; I had gone on a mission of mercy, and I was sure the God of mercy would protect me. In this hope, as the following will show, I was not disappointed. The Sheikh of the Beni Jebar, a bold, lawless chieftain, during my stay at Sanaa, had suffered from a slight attack of fever ; as usual in such cases, the mullahs were consulted, and these sages immediately had recourse to an elaborate application of charms and passages of the Koran ; but, as the patient’s faith, so the doctors pretended, was not very strong, neither the one nor the other relieved his pains nor allayed the internal fire ; in this emergency, the Nazaranee, who had already established his fame, was summoned to the house, and by compelling the sick man to swallow a strong dose of physic, and an equally strong emetic, the cure was soon effected. To this robber chief, who had never even thanked me for my medicines, I now applied for an escort ; and, as if anxious to make reparation for his ingratitude, he averred, by the life of his beard, that not only through the province of Sanaa, but over the whole globe, his brave and valiant tribe would safely conduct me.

“The Jews were deeply affected when they heard that I had decided on leaving, and group after group flocked into my room to give me the parting blessing. There was a tone of solemn earnestness in these meetings—an unconscious expression of the soul’s innermost feeling ; and that last day in Sanaa, when old and young, the man already advanced in the chilly vale of years, and the rabbi venerable for his learning, pressed forward to give me the final embrace, or to imprint the kiss of affectionate remembrance on my hand—that last day, I can truly say, I shall ever consider as the happiest of my life—the happiest of my missionary career.

“And now, once more, I grasp my pilgrim’s staff, and set out on my dreary and perilous journey. The first blush of morning was just tinging the horizon, the bazaars were still closed, and the dusty streets were still undisturbed by the terrible Bedouins of the desert, and the sombre Arab of the city; when, together with Ali Zarkhee and several other Mahommedans, I emerged from the gates and commenced my journey towards the cloud-capped mountains. My friends accompanied me about an hour’s distance, to a spot that had previously been appointed as the rendezvous for the escort. Faithful to his promise, the Sheikh of the Beni Jebar, with three armed Bedouins, was already on the ground. Here we all alighted, and had a short consultation about the road, which, of course, was enlivened by the smoke and bubble of the *bouree*. This matter being satisfactorily arranged, I again mounted my donkey, and, under the auspices of the three desert banditti, began to scale the rocks, which, like Cyclopean walls, guard the descent into the plain of Sanaa.”

And now we enter upon the recital of one of those episodes, in the wanderings of the Lord’s servant, in which we trace that protecting hand which never fails, and that watchful providence which neither slumbers nor sleeps. It was not the last and only time when he was to realize this blessedness, and when his soul was to be kept “in perfect peace,” amidst manifold dangers and impending death.

“The day, like every day in Arabia, was exceedingly hot, and we had hard work to cross the wild and craggy steeps over which our route lay. There was little in the scenery to cheer the eye or captivate the imagination. Stern and savage looked the rocks, poor and wretched the villages. Occasionally we descended into a gully, enlivened by the hoarse and monotonous murmurs of a fitful stream, that rolled its course between tall grass and dwarfish trees, till its waters were diverted into rude canals for the purpose of irrigation. On one of the rocks, over which rushed a turbulent and impetuous torrent, sat two women absorbed in grief and wailing most pitifully. I expected that a robbery or cruel murder had been perpetrated, and therefore stopped to inquire. At first they only answered by a louder and shriller lamentation; but when the query was repeated, they raised their flashing eyes, and convulsive with struggling passion, exclaimed, ‘Yes, Oh sons of the faithful! murder has been committed, for yesterday the infidels in yon village slew Hossein—my husband, and Ibrahim—Fatimah’s brother, and may—(here followed a fearful flood of curses) if we shall ever move from this spot, or desist from bemoaning the mighty and valiant, till their enemies are annihilated, and their blood is avenged.’ Probably by this time their inveterate malice has been satisfied, though it may have cost many a sister a brother, and

many a wife a husband. When will this sanguinary spirit of hate and vengeance be eradicated from the human heart ; and peace, charity, and godliness, shed their benign influence over the wide domains of man ! Late in the afternoon our path increased in ruggedness, and the prospect around us in sterility and desolation. Boundless ranges of rocks, like the surging waves of the stormy ocean, towered in wild and shapeless masses to the extreme bounds of the horizon, as if the earth, weary of the sin and iniquity of the inhabitants, heaved beneath the corrupt and unholy burden. We had reached the top of a cliff, and were searching for a descent into the valley, when, from a small fissure, which had no doubt been scooped out by some robber's hand, up started a bloated creature, who in an instant seized the halter of my donkey. The escort instinctively unsheathed their swords, and rushed upon the assailant, when a chorus of savage and wild yells announced that the ruffian was not alone. 'What do you want,' interrogated my guard, 'that you stop a traveller under the protection of the renowned Sheikh of the Beni Jebar ?' 'Silence,' was the reply, 'and let not an infidel Nazaranee mar the amity of our tribes.' Whilst this brief colloquy took place, upwards of a score of naked, ferocious figures, collected on the cliff. There was a great deal of muttering and whispering between our assailants and the escort. 'Has he money ? Would Ali Zarkhee ransom him ? Should not a Nazaranee be killed ?' Such and similar sentences I could distinctly hear ; but ominous as were these words, they did not fill me with fear or apprehension ; the Lord was my refuge, and His love my antidote to anxiety and distress. The Sheikh of the robbers, Achmed-el-Nisha, at the conclusion of this debate, summoned me to follow him to his house, in the Belad-el-Boostan. Here my luggage was carefully examined ; but to their infinite annoyance, they found very little worth taking, except my *Aneroid*, and this they regarded as a magical instrument, which they would not touch. They were all vexed at my poverty, but particularly one broad-chested ruffian, whose odious and repulsive appearance, even while I write this, flutters before my imagination like a frightful spectre. This fellow had no doubt anticipated a large share of the booty, and now, when he discovered his disappointment, like an infuriated bull he sprang upon me, and four or five times dashed his clenched horny hand in my face. 'By the life of the Prophet,' ejaculated my escort and donkey-driver, 'this shall not be ;' and in a moment the whole court rang with a fierce and furious clamour. Bleeding profusely from my nose and mouth, I still darted between the contending parties, and by entreaties, promises, and persuasions, allayed the flaming rage of my own people. Peace being again restored, the Sheikh, with surly hospitality, invited all to supper. After the repast, the barber of the village commenced greasing the arms, chests, and legs of the guests : he wanted to honour me also with a scrubbing and polish, but I declined the favour, as my legs were inflamed, and would not have



improved under his manipulations. 'Have you prayed?' inquired the horrid figure who had so ferociously attacked me. 'Yes, I have,' was the answer. 'And what did you pray for?' continued the same coarse voice. 'I prayed that God would deliver me out of your hands.' 'Say *salla allei-el-Nebi*,' i.e., peace be upon the Prophet (Mahomed). 'I won't lie, and therefore I will not say it,' was the rejoinder. 'Dog of a Nazaranee,' cried he, 'thou shalt yet die by these hands and this dagger.' Subsequently the Sheikh told me, that I must send to Ali Zarkhee for money to ransom me. 'I shall comply with your request,' said I, 'but I doubt whether Ali Zarkhee will comply with mine.' 'Then,' retorted he sullenly, 'I shall either detain you as a prisoner, or kill you as an infidel merits.' 'Do what you like, I am in your power.' The night had now already far advanced, and as I was tired and worn out, I flung myself on the hard floor, and fell into a kind of feverish slumber or stupor, from which I did not awake till the pale light of day began to stream into the room. The Sheikh had evidently become softened during the night, for he no longer threatened me with imprisonment and death; nay, he was so mollified, that he even offered to escort me over the mountains to the borders of the district under Sheikh Ishmael, the chief of Beit-el-Zebadonee, with whose brother I had got intimately acquainted at Sanaa. As my own guard had already been dismissed, I readily assented to this proposal; and thus, by the kind interposition of a gracious Providence the very men who a few hours before scorned, maltreated, and even threatened to kill me, became my guides, and the guardians of my safety.

"We started an hour after sunrise. It was an exceedingly hot morning, not a breath agitated the air—not a leaf trembled on the solitary tree. My companions predicted a storm, and the sultriness of the atmosphere, at an altitude of four thousand six hundred feet, gave an apparent certainty to their prognostication. I dreaded a long burning day, but I dreaded still more the pouring showers and the swelling torrents. Our fears were, however, groundless, for suddenly the air cooled, and a refreshing breeze swept, sighing down the rocks, into the narrow valley through which we slowly wended our way.

"The country we traversed was much the same as on the day previous, except that the ascents were now and then steeper, and the paths more rugged and uneven. We continued climbing up and down these interminable ranges of dizzy heights until '*Asr*,' two hours and a half before night, when we reached a little stone building, the boundary mark of the district. Here the escort left us, though not without searching me once more to see whether I had money or other valuables concealed about me. I had a letter to the Chief of an adjacent village, where we intended to remain over night; but the hospitable Arab, when he heard of the low state of my finances, was not anxious for my company. He had, however,

the generosity to give me a little bread, and also a guide to Beit-el-Zebadonee, where we arrived utterly knocked up at nine in the evening.

"Our reception by Sheikh Ishmael was very different from that of his neighbours. Immediately on our arrival, in the true patriarchal style, he ordered water for my feet, and made the barber lave the gory and torn skin. Whilst this grateful operation was going on, the servants brought in a wooden dish containing bread, interlarded with melted butter. It was not exactly a dinner that would have suited every palate, but we were famished, and did ample justice to our host's hospitality.

"I was too weak and exhausted to resume my journey the next morning, and we therefore stayed another night; and then, accompanied by a guide of the Beni Jebar, with which their Nageeb had furnished me, we proceeded again on our toilsome way. We were now in the most fertile region of Arabia, and the prospect in every direction was indeed grand, beautiful and picturesque. From the very summit of the highest mountain-peak, down to the lowest depth of the ravine, every patch of ground was either wooded by lofty trees, or overgrown with herbage and the profuse foliage of coffee plantations. In one part of the descent could be heard the noise of the cascade, as it dashed over the worn rock; in another the warbling notes of the many-coloured birds, as they winged their flight through the scented air. Here a green velvet slope is dotted with houses; yonder, on a high towering summit, gleam, in the rays of the sun, the grey walls of a chieftain's home. But sublime as are the sceneries in this part of Arabia, prodigal as are here the gifts of nature, man still is wild, and savage, and unthankful.

"Late at noon we parted with our guide, who dared not enter the province of Harass, under the sway of Sheikh Dai. He had been faithful to his charge, and several times arrested hostile parties who came running towards us, so that he well deserved a present; but what should I give him? Money—I had none; and clothing—my whole stock only consisted of a coarse cloak, coarse shirt, turban and belt, which I wore myself. The fellow noticed my embarrassment, and to compound the matter, coolly proposed that we should exchange garments. I did not feel inclined to return to Hodeida in the garb of a Beni Jebar, and we therefore simply confined the barter to our turbans (the best article of dress in my possession, and this cost at Hodeida only half a dollar, or two shillings), and parted eternal friends."

Mr. Stern now rejoined the track by which he had travelled to Sanaa. His Jewish acquaintances received him with kindly hospitality. His return to Hodeida is given in the following extracts. Wonder as well as pleasure filled the minds of those whose anxieties had been excited, whose warnings must again and again have recurred to his memory, and who thankfully welcomed his return.



"In the evening we reached Menakha, and alighted at our old quarters. The Jews were quite delighted to see me safely back again; and if they had been Christians, their inquiries about my work and the reception of the Gospel at Sanaa, could not have been more anxious and solicitous. They had read the books I left them on my first visit, and these silent messengers, together with the preached tidings of mercy, had evidently produced a deep impression on their minds.

"We remained at Menakha two days, and then set forth again on our road to Hodeida, which, with profound gratitude to our Heavenly Father, I entered on Monday, October 13th (1856).

"Subsequently I proceeded by land to Mokha, where the numerous troubles, fatigues and privations I had undergone, brought on a dangerous fever. The few Jewish families in the place were most assiduous in their attentions to me, and I shall never forget the kindness of Mr. Landan, a German Jew, who, with a cargo of goods, was on his voyage from India to Suez. This good Samaritan, whom I had met only once before, nursed me with the tenderness and affection of a brother; he even wanted to let his ship go on, and to follow by land after my recovery; but to this I could not consent, as I knew he would thereby incur a heavy loss. Such acts, from a strictly religious Jew towards a Missionary, strikingly show that the enmity of the cross is taken away, and that a new spirit is animating the hearts of the widely scattered sons of Israel.

"My illness, and the prevalence of a suffocating *semoun*, detained me at Mokha longer than I had contemplated. On the eighth day the fever abated a little, and I made an attempt to quit the gloomy and dismal walls of my lodging; but my wonted strength was so undermined, that this feeble exertion brought on a dangerous relapse. On November 3rd, the sky, which since my departure from Hodeida had been obscured by dark and misty clouds, became again clear and visible. Several of our native friends immediately hastened to announce to Mons. P—— (the agent of a French house) and myself, the cheering tidings that the wind would change, and that we should at last be favoured with the impatiently longed-for *shemal*. This intelligence made us forget all our sufferings, and with the utmost expedition we prepared for our voyage to Aden. A great number of ships, laden with coffee, were moored in the roads, and from these our Arab friends selected the best built and the most ably manned. The rais, or captain, a short, sinewy, genuine son of Africa, made the purchase of our provisions, and as I was too weak to walk, two of his crew took me in their arms and hurried me down to the beach. The wind was still blowing from the south, and the breakers came rolling towards the land with appalling violence. By dint of labour, we paddled through the raging and foaming element in the direction of the ship, which lay at anchor beyond the shoals that stretch along the whole coast. Before we sailed, there was, as usual, a great deal of noise and

clamour, altercation and abuse. One proposed that we should wait and see whether the wind would really shift to the north; and another asserted that if it had been decreed that we should pass the Bab (straits), we ought boldly to brave our fate. Mons. P—— and myself were too anxious to get out of aguish Mokha to oppose this latter mode of reasoning, and though wind and sea were against us, we unfolded our latteen sail and tacked towards the scorched and barren coast of Africa. Our rais, like a man conscious that he was an Arab—and that an Arab, even at sea, is unfettered by the rules of science and civilization—displayed in his mode of navigation a recklessness that made me shudder whenever our little fabric came close to a rock or island. Modern improvements and discoveries have not yet, on the Red Sea, superseded the prejudices of ignorance, and the Arab of the present day, like his ancestors who in times of yore manned the boats of Sesostriis and the ships of Tarshish, will, on a voyage from Egypt to India, dispense with compass, quadrant, chart, and every other requisite by which life and property are ensured on the ocean; the stars by night and the coast by day are his guide and map, and should even a storm obscure his view of heaven and earth, is not *Alla Kerim* able to steer his ship aright in the tempest as well as in the calm? This kind of reasoning we heard from our rais, and, however we might dissent from his views, he had the crew on his side, and they all admired the wisdom and faith of their chief. The fury of the gale increased as the day advanced, and before the sun was in the meridian, we were driving helplessly between mountains of green water, amid the spray of rising and sinking waves. We were now nearing the dark and frowning rocks which line the coast of Africa, but the man at the helm did not alter his course, nor the rais issue orders to shorten the sail. Both myself and Mons. P—— perceived the danger to which our forty-ton craft would be exposed if not checked in her career, and we therefore at once requested the rais to have her canvas shifted, and the helm put a lee. He complied with our wish, and the little vessel, as if accustomed to brave wind and sea, leaped over the crested billows and yawning chasms, towards an island that offered us a safe anchorage for the night. Some of our crew immediately hastened on shore to prepare the evening repast, and also to dry our clothing, which had become thoroughly drenched. I remained on board, and there, surrounded by a few of the passengers and sailors, I passed the evening in conversing with these followers of the false prophet, on the hope and faith of the Christian. With daylight we again ventured into the open sea. The wind was hushed, and our ship floated lightly over the heaving and restless waters. Our rais, who for many years had watched the various signs which herald the *semoun*, was not deceived by this illusive calm; on the contrary, his small, piercing eyes wandered over the wide expanse before us with an anxiety that boded nothing propitious to our voyage. As anticipated, the hot wind, which for

the last sixty days had barred the straits to every native boat, came as usual rushing on from the desert in unrestrained fury, threatening to engulf us and our ship in the waves, which in rapid succession broke over us. We now saw that it would be utterly impracticable to force our way through the narrow passage before us, where all was one chaos of foam and spray. The common danger produced unanimity of feeling, so that without one dissentient voice it was agreed that we should return to Mokha. Our latteen sail was immediately swung round, and, driven before the gale, we accomplished the distance of thirty miles in less than two hours. Mons. P——, on beholding again the flat-roofed houses of Mokha, was quite indignant, and, in order to give vent to his ill-temper, he abused the Arabs, their ships, government, and everything else connected with their country and mode of life. I felt too grateful for our escape from shipwreck to think much upon the miseries of a protracted stay in that wretched town—the hot-bed of poverty and disease.

“And now we are once more installed in our old lodging, inhaling an atmosphere impregnated with fever, and chewing the cud of our gloomy and melancholy reflections. The few Jews—the remnant of a once flourishing community—who reside in Mokha, almost daily either came to my lodging, or I visited their reed-built enclosure. A good number of the more respectable Arabs also favoured us with their company, and as they knew I was a Missionary, we generally had lengthened religious conversation. They never evinced the slightest indications of bigotry; in fact, Islamism, like Popery, has very few devout champions within the confines of its own sacred territory.

“Our time, which really hung heavy upon us, was thus whiled away between the alternations of fever and the visits of Jews and Mahommedans, till the 29th (Oct.), when, by a fortunate circumstance, a cargo of coffee, in charge of a formidable Sheikh, was proceeding by land to a small bay beyond the straits. With this leader of a daring tribe of robbers we arranged to travel, on the condition that he pledged himself to conduct us safely to the spot where a boat was waiting to convey the coffee to Aden. He assented to our proposition, and all was settled for our departure next day. The morning was tolerably cool when we started, and a few clouds which hung on the horizon prognosticated a sunless, comfortable day. I was still an invalid, and my whole frame burning with feverish fire; but the very idea of having left Mokha alleviated my sufferings, and imparted hope to my desponding spirits. The *semoun* of the last twenty-four hours had entirely exhausted itself, and the light currents of air which swept across our path announced the wished-for change. Our illusion was only of short duration; for the sky before noon became as usual red, and the atmosphere oppressive. Even our camels appeared conscious of the approach of the *semoun*, for they seemed quite uneasy, and

instinctively accelerated their steps, as if anxious to terminate the day's task. The air, charged with clouds of heated dust, though quite suffocating to us, did not much inconvenience our Bedouins, who walked behind their camels, entertaining themselves with songs and stupid stories. About three in the afternoon we reached an encampment under the control of our Sheikh Ali Zabeed, and met with a kind and hospitable reception by his people.

"The next day we had to accomplish a journey of fourteen hours, and that too under the prostrating blasts of the hot wind. We did not alight from our camels till evening, when we came near some wells,—the camp-ground of migratory Arabs. Here we remained till midnight, and then once more mounted our patient animals, and set out on our doleful journey, which ended at nine in the morning. Soon after we had unloaded, we were visited by one of the Sheikhs, who, by his exorbitant exactions and atrocious crimes, had greatly contributed to make that part of the coast dreaded by all travellers. He was accompanied by a half-clad youth, who had a heavy gun suspended on his naked, brown shoulder. The Chief, when he saw me gazing on the little fellow with his ponderous weapon, said, 'Achmed knows how to handle arms as well as you and I,' and then, pointing to a dislodged piece of rock, he added, 'only a week ago, he hit a *Sumalee* on yonder stone, and killed him with one bullet.' 'And don't you consider it wrong, capriciously to murder a poor fellow who passes near your encampment?' 'Wrong,' reiterated he, 'certainly not, for I am lord of these domains, and no one has a right to intrude on the same, without my previous sanction.' He was reminded by one of our party that we had not conformed to this rule. 'Yes,' rejoined he, 'you would also have to smart for it, if you were not under the protection of my friend Ali Zabeed.'

"Mons. P—— and another traveller pointed to the numerical strength of our party, a brag at which he contemptuously smiled; and then, to show that he was not alone, he gave a shrill shriek, and in less than ten minutes, there appeared groups of armed savages on the ridges of the surrounding cliffs, ready to do the bidding of their Chief. 'You see,' said he, that I am not alone, but if you carried the aggregate riches of Arabia, you would have nothing to fear, so long as my friend is with you; and he will not leave you till you have embarked.' His words proved true, for our Arab escort continued near us till all were on board, and moving out of the little bay.

"The journey in the desert had been exceedingly trying, but no sooner were we on the agitated and turbulent sea, than all our fellow-passengers began to sigh for the camel and the sandy plain. Our voyage of eighty miles occupied us three days; but slow as was our progress, I did not regret it, as the sea air invigorated my exhausted strength, and removed the tormenting fire which the fever had kindled in my throbbing brain. On December the 6th

(1856) we landed at Aden, where I was received with the greatest cordiality by most of the British residents. Mr. Badger, the chaplain, invited me to make my abode in his house, and I shall always retain a grateful recollection of the kindness and attention I experienced under his roof. The day after my arrival being Sunday, I preached in the English Church to a good and attentive congregation.

"And here I will close the account of this journey, on which I experienced so many mercies. Whatever blessed results may accrue from it, I will say, 'Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto Thy name be all the praise and glory.'"

It was difficult to convince some persons that our Missionary had accomplished so difficult an undertaking. His Arab attendant did not fail to enlarge upon all the varied dangers to which they had been exposed, and he went so far as to assure Mr. Stern, that there were times when he had himself been tempted to take his life, and that he would have done so, had he not been convinced, that the rewards of his faithfulness, would exceed any possible gain by the murder of his employer.

Mr. Stern obtained a passage at Aden, by the English steamer, to Suez. The knowledge of the bold and successful adventure in which he had been engaged, excited unbounded surprise and admiration. He asked the Captain of the Steamer whether he could not reduce the passage-money, seeing that he was the Missionary of a Society supported by voluntary contributions, and engaged in a charitable work. "I cannot make any reduction in the fares," was the reply; "but I can take you for nothing. I neither know, nor care for your Society; but I will give you a free passage, provided it be for your own benefit." Mr. Stern merely bowed his acknowledgments. It is almost unnecessary to add that, the funds of the Society benefited by the estimation in which the enterprising traveller was held.

Mr. Stern arrived in Constantinople, January 1st, 1857.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### ABYSSINIA.

The missionary journey of Mr. Stern into the heart of Arabia Felix, and his safe return, after encountering dangers which, however, did not exceed those of which he had been forewarned, was a marked event in the history of the London Society. In the Report for 1857 it was thus referred to :—"We recall to your recollection for one moment the great achievement recorded in our Report this year, of a journey into Arabia by your missionary Stern. It is signally owing to the grace and goodness of God that he succeeded in that most arduous enterprise, and this he humbly and thankfully acknowledges. We may well feel, that if it had been almost the only effort of the year, our Society would have been the means of accomplishing an object worth its existence. May we not hope, that the preserving kindness of our God towards His servant, is a token for good in connection with the work fulfilled? And may we not plead with you for your fervent supplications, that the Gospel preached to those Jews and Mohammedans, who hung upon his lips, may yield abundant fruit in that benighted land unto life eternal?"

The interests of the Society, apart from any desire of his own, demanded that he should visit England, in order that he might personally recount the wonders which the Lord had wrought. Nor can those who had the opportunity of hearing him, ever forget the impression which that recital made, and how it seemed to open new and more vivid conceptions concerning the nature of Missionary work amongst the Jews. In the autumn of the same year,



(1857), Mr. Stern returned to Constantinople and pursued with unabated zeal and faithfulness the labours to which his life had been dedicated, both in the city itself, and in the neighbouring towns and villages.

In order that this period may not appear a literary blank in the history of the Missionary, it is well to give his statement concerning the action and influence which Rabbinism exercised at Constantinople. This subject has been already referred to, but it is expanded, and additional light thrown upon it, by the following comment :—

“The idea that Rabbinism, like the Decalogue, was revealed in the fires of Sinai, and is of equal authority with the Law written by the finger of God, the Jews through successive ages, in all the countries of their dispersion, have implicitly maintained. That the contradictory dogmas, shallow sophistries, and dangerous morals enunciated in the Talmud, could not have had the Deity for their author, and man’s welfare for their aim, did not much trouble their minds or perplex their judgment. Here and there an enlightened Jew might protest against rabbinical usurpation, but his warning voice fell on deaf ears, and he had to retreat before the threat of excommunication, and the vindictiveness of unrelenting Chachamim. In many parts of Europe, the successful labours of the Jews’ Society, and the general diffusion of knowledge during the last half century, have to a great extent undermined that system of falsehood which pride and ambition had imposed on ignorant credulity ; and the Jew, emancipated from the shackles of a spiritual bondage, may either, with the lamp of truth in his possession, press forward to heaven ; or, intoxicated with the vapours of rationalism and infidelity, rush recklessly on to perdition. Not so in the East. Here, in this putrescent moral atmosphere, Talmudic Judaism, supported by the temporal and spiritual powers of the Chachamim, has hitherto tolerated no antagonistic influence, nor met with any serious check. The inquisition, a name which ought to fill with horror the inmost recesses of a Jew’s soul, has found in the very land that afforded him a refuge from the inexorable Torquemada, a loathsome imitation in the Chacham Khané, where obedience to the Talmud has ever been enforced by the lash, and freedom of thought has perished in a loathsome cell.

“No wonder that the Chachamim raved and fumed, when their spiritual Ghetto was invaded by missionaries, and their dark and soul-destroying system was unveiled by Christian hands. No wonder that vile epithets and execrable curses were prodigally lavished upon us, and all who ventured to listen to our teaching and to visit our homes. They had sagacity enough to perceive that our efforts were dangerous to their craft, and subversive of their rule,

and they therefore endeavoured to neutralize by threats and warnings, what they dared not attack by Scriptural arguments, in public controversy. The more enlightened and liberal ideas which had, however, already been communicated, subsequent events tended still more to confirm, and the Chachamin, conscious of their inability to repress the generous impulse for moral and intellectual improvement among many of their people, with a forced grace accepted the proposal of M. Albert Cohen (the President of a benevolent society of Israelites at Paris), who kindly offered to establish schools for the better training of Jewish boys and girls. Inveterate hostility towards the Protestants, and a frantic desire to counteract their efforts, lent support and encouragement to the new scheme. In 1854, a school, under a French master and mistress, was opened, and in the absence of all enlightened sympathy and cordial co-operation on the part of the heads of the community, the establishment had to struggle with numerous difficulties and great obstacles, in order to maintain a precarious existence."

Mr. Stern then refers to the famous edict which was promulgated by the Turkish Government, immediately after the Crimean War. By this edict, religious liberty was certified to all the subjects of the empire, and many new privileges guaranteed to those who belonged to other nationalities. These have been but imperfectly satisfied, in the practical action of the Government.

"On the 18th February, 1856, the famous "*Hatti-Humaioun*" was proclaimed, and all the friends of liberty and civilization, both in the East and West, rapturously applauded the Sultan's noble act. The barricades to free thought and moral regeneration were now demolished, and the philanthropist and the Christian thought the memorable victories on the hills and valleys of the Crimea not too dearly purchased, if they might only realize the beautiful vision of converted and civilized Asia. That this was merely a glowing and a pleasing fancy, the last two years have painfully demonstrated; still every one must admit that the spasmodic enthusiasm roused the Oriental from his leaden slumbers, and awakened hopes and fears throughout the motley population of these lands, which at no very remote period must effect many a salutary change. The adherents of the Talmud, who, like the followers of the Arabian prophet, regard every change as apostacy, and every innovation as sin, for the nonce forgot their wonted bigotry, and the anticipation that a liberal education of their children might ere long prove a golden mine to their pockets, and also arrest the operations of the missionaries, made them even anxious to see the reform movement prosecuted with energy and vigour.

"A Committee, consisting of several foreign and wealthy native Jews, with the Chacham for a President, was immediately appointed, and plans for schools and other needful improvements proposed

and approved. But in the language of '*La Presse d'Orient*,' a French newspaper, '*une ombre avait glassée sur ce brillant tableau.*' A fanatic Chacham, whose narrow mind revolted at everything that did not tend to magnify the wisdom of the writers of the Talmud, took umbrage at these well-directed efforts, and spurred by a superstitious frenzy, and the persuasions of a band of partisans, he boldly denounced the intended changes, as Protestant in their origin, and anti-Talmudic in their aim. His sharp rebukes and systematic misrepresentations gained little sympathy or notice; this still more galled his morbid temper, and careless of the scandal and disgrace he was occasioning, he publicly and in a full synagogue, vented his suppressed indignation by anathematizing the schools, committee, teachers, parents, children; in fact, every one, whatever his position might be, who was in favour of progress, not excepting even the Chacham himself. Religious prejudices being thus again invoked, and the stagnant waters of bigotry again agitated, it became an imperative duty, in order to hush the excitement, and to remove the odium of an excommunication from the Chief Rabbi, that the audacious offender should be chastised for this indiscreet ebullition of his zeal. A court of Chachamim was immediately convoked, and the pious delinquent arraigned for misdemeanour; happily for him, all his judges sympathized with him in his religious sentiments, and these merely awarded him, as a peace-offering to the aggrieved party, a reproof which was administered with 'bated breath and whispering humbleness.' Faction being thus expeditiously crushed, and harmony restored, the wealthy and affluent inaugurated the auspicious event by contributing liberally towards the building of a new school, large enough to accommodate fifty boarders and four hundred day scholars. Our mission schools were now as ever before decried as superfluous, and the parents and children threatened with excision from the synagogue, if they disregarded the rabbinical mandate. This interdict called forth resistance, and begat opposition. The parents had confidence in our schools, and not in their own; they knew that we did not pretend to give their children a highly polished education, but they saw that, instead of it, we endeavoured to impart a better mould to their hearts, and a healthier impulse to their moral energies; and this so impressed them with the superiority of our training, that many did not hesitate to declare that if their children were not permitted to receive instruction in the schools of the Protestants, neither should they receive any in the new schools of the Jews."

A variety of new facts were from time to time brought before the attention of the friends of Israel, in relation to the Jews in various parts of the world. Some of the most suggestive and interesting had reference to Abyssinia, in which it was known that a large number of Jews were located, who preserved in a remarkable

manner the traditions of their fathers. These descendants of Abraham, were only acquainted with the idolatrous and corrupt form of Christianity, which was presented by the Abyssinian Church. They were reported to be temperate and unprejudiced, and there was every reason to believe, that the truths of the Christian faith, untinctured by the superstitions of which they had always been eye-witnesses, would secure their attention and sympathy.

When the importance of this field of effort, and the duty of attempting its cultivation, presented itself to the attention of the London Committee, their eyes were instinctively turned towards the man, who had earned a reputation for courage, wisdom and success, such as rarely had been attained. To him, therefore, they appealed ; and Mr. Stern, "assuredly gathering that the Lord had called" him "to preach the Gospel" to the Jews of Abyssinia, expressed his willingness to proceed on such a mission.

Our minds have been made familiar by the events of the late war in the Soudan, with the hardships and difficulties which such a journey would involve. But the danger to the traveller's life and person were inconsiderable in comparison to that of which the Missionary had had experience in Arabia Felix. He proceeded to make the necessary preparations, and on September 5th, 1859, he was again on his way to Cairo, whence he had formerly started eastward to Arabia Felix, and from which point he was to proceed southward to Abyssinia, on the like errand of love and mercy.

On this occasion, our Missionary had provided himself with varied means, by which his journey might be made useful and instructive. While in London, he had taken lessons in photography gratuitously given by Mr. Mayall, the well-known photographer. Mr. Mayall had, in the most liberal manner, afforded him every facility for obtaining a competent knowledge of the art, and allowed him to practise freely in his studio in Regent-street. On one occasion, a friend of Mr. Stern went to Mr. Mayall's studio, for the purpose of having his portrait taken. The Missionary, in artist's attire, was busy behind a screen, and every now and then appeared, to the wonder and perplexity of his quondam friend. Convinced that, if it was a mere resemblance, it was a most remarkable one, he chal-

lenged his identity, and then, amidst much mirth and amusement, Mr. Stern made known to him the nature of his performance, and the object he had in view. The London Committee subsequently made a small grant towards the expenses of his apparatus, as contributing materially towards the illustrations of some of their publications. We shall see, in the rather distant future, that the knowledge of photography was not an unalloyed advantage to the enterprising traveller.

Mr. Stern re-visited Jerusalem, on his way to Alexandria and Cairo, in order that he might obtain from Bishop Gobat, or from any other source, such information concerning Abyssinia as might be useful to him, and promote the object of his journey. A Gentile Mission to the interior of that country, with very equivocal results, had long existed; and it was hoped that the agents might render some service to Mr. Stern, in his attempts to reach the Falashas. It was decided that the line of travel should be by the Nile and Khartoum, which, although more tedious, offered in other respects greater facilities for its safe accomplishment. The route from Massowah, on the shores of the Red Sea, would have been much shorter, but the tribes between that port and the Abyssinian kingdom were in a state of revolt, and progress through that part of the country was almost impracticable. From Alexandria our Missionary wrote:—

“I am happy to inform you that I have at last, through the mercy of our God, safely reached Alexandria. The satisfaction which my visit to Jerusalem would have afforded me, was almost entirely marred by the unexpected intelligence, which came on the very eve of my arrival in the Holy City, that the plague had broken out at Beyrout, and that the whole of Syria was in quarantine. Here I was in a dilemma, from which I scarcely knew how to extricate myself. The steamers without exception refused to take any passengers, and the road through the desert was declared to be both unsafe and very expensive. The only means of getting into Egypt, of which I could now avail myself, was a native sailing boat; and reluctant as I felt to entrust my life to one of those frail and dangerous craft, which seldom can brave a rough sea, I was obliged to do so, as I had no alternative. Together with a motley mixture of twenty-five uncouth Europeans and Asiatics, I embarked on the 2nd Nov. at Jaffa, and you can easily imagine the weather we had, when I tell you that the voyage of 250 miles occupied twelve days. On one occasion, the little bark was not fifty miles from Egypt, when suddenly a terrific gale sprang up from the West; and



notwithstanding all our exertions, drove us over the surging and buffeting waves back to the coast of Syria, into the roads of Tyre. After two days the wind changed again, and once more we steered for Alexandria, which, in an exhausted, and almost famished condition, we reached on the 14th inst. Thus the trip to Palestine cost me many a painful hour, but I do not regret it, for the information I obtained from the Bishop, and the pleasant and edifying intercourse I had with him, the missionaries and the converts, amply compensated me for the sufferings to which the voyage subjected me."

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## CHAPTER XX.

### THE NILE, KHARTOUM, WOCHNEE, AND TSCHELGA.

At the beginning of December, 1859, Mr. Stern left Cairo, on his way to Abyssinia. It is desirable that some extracts should be given from his journal of travel, in order that it may be seen under what conditions he pursued his way. It will recall to memory the names of places by which our gallant soldiers recently advanced, in the vain hope of rescuing the gallant General Gordon, from the hands of the Soudanees.

“It was with a mingled sensation of joy and regret, of hope and fear, that I embarked on board a *dahabia* which lay moored at *Boulak*, the port of Cairo; and, with a sad and lingering look, bade farewell to Egypt and railways—to Egypt and the last vestige of civilized life. Our crew, who, with the exception of the rais, were all natives of Nubia, received me and my companion with grins and smiles, which, to the surprise of their *baksheesh*-longing cupidity, we returned with liberal interest in the same ephemeral currency. The wind being favourable, the cable was instantly loosed, the latteen sail unfurled, and amidst the usual accompaniments of disputes and quarrels, bustle and confusion, our boat swept past the peasant’s hut and the Pasha’s palace—the pleasure-grounds of the living, and the time-defying tombs of the dead—till evening veiled garden and pyramid, hovel and hall, from our admiring gaze. The wind, which increased with the advance of night, propelled our craft at such a rapid rate, that, notwithstanding the varied attractions on the banks of the Nile, we continued our voyage with no other interruption than an occasional brush from a floating stack of straw, or a jerk on the shallow bed of the river.

“After a pleasant sail of more than a week, we reached *Carnak* and *Luxor*, where we spent four days amongst ruins and tombs, which have been so often described that I need not plunge into the secrets of hieroglyphic mysteries, or linger in the rifled chambers of proud royalty’s last resting-place. The rais, and crew of the

boat, shared in our stoic indifference to the fallen grandeur and gloomy desolation of *Thebes*; and without a single sigh or a parting glance of sorrow, we took our departure from a spot where vanity and ambition have traced their awful characters on the wreck and ruins of a city, which, to the very verge of time, may well elicit the wonder and admiration of every visitor.

“From royal Thebes to *Assuan* (the Syene of Ezekiel xxix. 10), we passed, in uninterrupted succession, cities and temples that once rang with the hum of busy and gay multitudes, but where now no sound breaks upon the ear, except the discordant cry of the jackal, or the plaintive ditty of the weary camel-driver.

“Anxious to hasten on, we immediately, on reaching the first cataract, secured camels; and on the following day, before the sun had sunk behind the rocks and granite cliffs, which form the natural boundary between ancient Egypt and Ethiopia, we were again spreading our sails to the gentle breeze, and drifting slowly up the sacred river, till December the 14th, when we exchanged the boat for the camel, and the muddy Nile for the sandy desert. Our original intention was to go to Wady Halfa, a few miles south of the cataracts which here impede the navigation up to Berber, and from thence by land to Dongola; but as that journey would have occupied us far more time than the route from Korosko, across the dreaded Bahr Atmur; we chose, regardless of its dangers, and trusting in the protection of our God, the more fatiguing and trying, though the shorter and more expeditious journey.

“Sheikh Achmed el Khalifa, one of the Chiefs responsible for the safety of goods and travellers across the desert, was then at Korosko; and as I had letters of recommendation to him, my companion and myself, on disembarking, repaired to his dwelling. Together with his brother and some subordinates, he was seated on a carpet under the shadow of the court wall, smoking and sipping coffee. We squatted down near these magnates of the sandy wilds, and after a few unmeaning complimentary phrases, and a heap of commonplace inquiries, we broached the object of our visit, and requested to be furnished, as soon as practicable, with a sufficient number of camels for our journey. The worthy Chief at once promised to attend to this matter; and after a few other arrangements about the hire of animals, and the weight they would be able to carry, we took leave and returned to our tent.

“The following day, the owners of the camels made their appearance, and began to inspect our cargo. Confident that we were strangers, and unacquainted with the regulations, they began to grumble at the size of one box and the weight of another. At first we were quiet; but as patience is not very elastic in an atmosphere where the thermometer rises to above a hundred in the shade, we at last silenced their garrulous tongues by acquainting them with the agreement we had concluded with the Sheikh, and the injury their bluster and talk would inflict on their reputation for honesty, and

their prospect of a *baksheesh*. The last word had a talismanic effect ; for it was scarcely uttered, when all instantly assented to our proposition, and promised, with the help of Allah, to make the journey a perfect pleasure trip (of course it was understood) if sand, heat, and bad water would allow it.

"The same evening our water-skins were filled, our packages securely bound with strong ropes, and every other preparation completed for our march across the dreaded desert, which, till within the last few years, on account of its many dangers, was under an interdict from the Egyptian Government, and would probably still enjoy its undisturbed solitude, had not some European merchants who trade with the Soudan, succeeded, through the influence of their respective Consuls, in having it opened for the more expeditious transport of their various articles of commerce.

"Our caravan, which consisted of about two hundred camels, met together, more for the sake of company than for mutual protection, at a place called El Bab, six hours' distance from the banks of the Nile. Here all our fellow-travellers were already encamped, and it was quite a cheerful sight to see in the boundless desert so many blazing bivouac fires, and to hear in the otherwise tenantless waste the hum of so much active and busy talk.

"During the summer months, the caravans, in their passage across this sun-blighted tract, march from eighteen to twenty hours per day ; but, when the heat is less intense and violent, the evening terminates the journey, and the camp is not broken up again till the scantily-clad camel-owners feel their chilled frames warmed and their cold blood heated, by the fierce rays of a scorching and merciless sun.

"On the fifth day we reached *Murad*, the only spot in this arid and blighted desert where there are a few brackish wells, which contain a sufficient quantity of water to prevent the various caravans that travel along this route from perishing with thirst. We were fortunate in passing just after the rainy season, when the wells are tolerably full, and the muddy, turbid liquid, may yet be gulped down without a shudder or paling lip ; but when I returned from Abyssinia, after a very dry summer, the water of the *Murad* was so unpalatable to the taste, and so deleterious to the system, that I believe an unfiltered draught of the Thames in the month of August would have been like nectar compared to this loathsome and disgusting drink.

"Our empty *gerbehs* being again replenished, and the thirst of our camels allayed, we quitted at a very early hour these stagnant wells, and in a solemn and serious mood, which the prospect of a very wearisome day was not calculated to dissipate, trudged in separate files over the sand-covered, pathless waste. There is something gratifying to the mind and cheering to the heart, in the midst of the keen toils of a desert journey, where you have continually to struggle with dangers and fatigues, hardships and privations, which

those who live in the busy hive of large cities, or move about in the garlanded and festooned circles of fashion, cannot possibly appreciate ; in fact, the very idea that your life is bound up with the filthy water-skins strung on the back of the camel you bestride, or linked to the heap of stones carelessly strewn as waymarks along the path you pursue, tends not only to brace the nerves and to fortify the soul, but also to strengthen the belief and to deepen the conviction that there is a gracious Being watching over you, whose presence fills every void, and whose goodness guards your every step.

“The tantalizing *sareb*, or mirage, which had mocked our sight ever since we entered this arid domain of sand and calcined rocks, increased with the power of the sun and the refraction of his rays. This treacherous phenomenon, as if delighted to irritate and to vex the wayworn pilgrim, now deludes his eye with a regular succession of beautiful lakes and shady avenues, and then again with an expanse of waving grass around a picturesque villa. Here is presented a grove of towering trees, there a flock of browsing cattle ; in fact, the deception is so perfect, that the traveller will not believe that the beautiful scene on which the eye longingly lingers is not real, till his camel actually treads in the saltpetre-encrusted soil, and dissipates the optical illusion. On the eleventh day, we reached—minus a good number of camels, which perished from exhaustion—*Abou Hamed*, where we again beheld the towering palm, and drank of the refreshing Nile.”

From this point, the Nile again became the traveller's highway. After the monotony and discomfort of the desert, and the sandy wastes through which they had passed, the luxuriant vegetation of the banks and islands by which they sailed, and the rest which they enjoyed, strengthened and refreshed them for their onward journey.

On the 18th of January, they arrived at *Khartoum*, the name of which will always be identified with the heroic struggle, and the martyr's end, of one of the most distinguished and Christian of England's sons. Khartoum is the most important town of the Soudan, situated near the confluence of the White and Blue Nile. It was at that time the centre of trade for all the surrounding regions, and the point at which the slave dealers assembled, when carrying on their nefarious and unlawful traffic. In this place, the traveller was dependent upon the hospitality of the inhabitants, there being no public khan in which he might find a refuge. Dr. Natterer, the Austrian Consul, most kindly received the missionaries under his roof, and there they remained, until arrangements were made for the prosecution of their journey.

"The bazaar, which in Khartoum, as in Constantinople and Cairo, constitutes the rendezvous of the merchant and shopkeeper, the idle and the busy, was the spot which naturally attracted our curiosity. It was now towards noon, when the vendors of milk, bread, fish, poultry, onions, and garlic, brought their inviting delicacies to the market; and never did I, in all my peregrinations, jostle through such a crowd of semi-naked savages, and breathe such an unclean aroma, as in that strange emporium of African trade. In the motley crowd were to be seen the haughty Turk, the grave Arab, the grinning, thick-lipped negro, the melancholy Galla, and the garrulous representatives of countless tribes of Bedouins, from the shores of the Red Sea to the deserts of Darfour; and as the majority of this mixed multitude had the greatest contempt for dress, and a passionate fondness for rancid grease, which ran in stagnant and blistering streams down their matted and bushy hair, till every one glistened and sparkled like a lump of melting tallow, the *toule ensemble* presented a most savage and repulsive scene.

"The following day most of the European residents, who here constitute a little colony of about fifteen individuals, visited us. Two or three of these are in the service of the Egyptian Government; but the rest are traders and hunters of the elephant, along the banks of the White River, where they also spend the greater part of the year. The ivory trade, which, a score of years ago, was a most lucrative speculation, has, of late, become a very hazardous business; and I have been assured by natives, as well as Europeans, that most persons, and especially the Mohammedans, who embark in this dangerous and expensive traffic, make it remunerative by combining with it an extensive barter in slaves. Frequently, an armed crew of a boat, in sailing up the river, espy a settlement of negroes, and before these unsuspecting dwellers in the jungle are aware of the marauders' approach, they are hemmed in by a set of inhuman wretches, who, prompted by a love of rapine and plunder, not unmingled with a fanatical zeal for religion, eagerly rush upon these unhappy beings, and before they can seize their defensive weapons, the encampment is on fire, and half its occupants at the mercy of the fiendish captors. Occasionally the blacks, goaded to desperation, lie in ambush for their cruel foes; and no sooner do these, confident in their arms, touch the land, than they are pierced by scores of poisoned arrows, or transfixes by many a quivering spear.

"The Government, notwithstanding treaties with European Powers, not only connives at this infamous traffic, but encourages it by sending extensive orders for strong sinewy blacks, to fill up the thinning ranks of the army. Dr. Natterer, the energetic Austrian Consul, has repeatedly protested against this official infringement of established contracts; but his temerity hitherto only involved him in serious troubles with the Governor of the Soudan; and for a considerable time he even dared not venture into the



streets without a loaded revolver in his pocket. Even during my stay at Khartoum, I heard of several convoys, which had secretly been imported into town, and as ninety-two boats were then on their way up the White River, it was generally anticipated that the pretended speculators in ivory would make the negroes pay in default of the elephant."

The arrangements for their onward march having been completed, Mr. Stern wrote as follows :—

"Our stay at Khartoum having been protracted beyond our original intention, we at last made preparations for our departure to real savagedom; and on the twelfth day after our arrival, embarked on the Blue Nile, and, between islands covered with huge crocodiles, and high banks wooded by umbrella-shaped acacias, sailed along to *Abou Harass*. The wind, after a few hours' languid breathing, subsided into a wearisome calm, and we had the greatest trouble in inducing our lazy crew, who lay coiled upon boxes and spars in the grilling sun, to betake themselves to the towing rope. The following morning we came to *Elfun* (ten minutes from the river), a wretched building abounding with *meressa* houses, and an equally respectable population. The market, which happened to be held on our arrival, prompted the rais and his sailors who had a few piastres to spend, to make a halt. Mid-day passed away, afternoon came, the sun softly moved down the horizon, and still none of the crew made their appearance. We began to think that they had deserted us and the boat, when several of them, a little too gay and exhilarated from the potations they had quaffed, crept on board. The rais soon followed, but before he could reach the boat he fell on the heated sand, writhing in agonizing contortions. His whole appearance indicated that the inebriating *meressa*, in which he had freely indulged whilst under the influence of ague, must either be expelled, or our craft sail without its commander. The latter plan was considered the most feasible, when it occurred to me that, as possibly we might all have to suffer from similar maladies, a few experiments might not be amiss in promoting the skill of our future practice. Our box of medicines, which, like the hoarded treasure of the miser, we never allowed to be out of our sight, was instantly ransacked, and an emetic, such as an extreme fever case alone could sanction, was poured down the throat of our helpless patient. The result justified the potency of the remedy, and I believe the grateful rais and his amazed crew regarded me thenceforward as the greatest physician, and the most wonderful *hakeem*, that ever ploughed the waters of the Blue Nile.

"On the following day, we passed a good number of flocks, which were browsing quite unguarded among the trees and bushes along the river's edge. Our sailors, under the pretext of collecting wood, neared the land, and before we could remonstrate with them, they had stolen a sheep, and stowed it safely away. In the evening, we



moored the boat under a high bank, far from any human habitation, and there, in conformity with the Mohammedan ritual, the stolen sheep was slaughtered and devoured in the name of Allah. The religious scruples of these thieves reminded me of some Greek pirates, who, a few years ago, seized a schooner in the Ægean Sea, and murdered every soul on board ; yet these desperadoes, who did not shrink from perpetrating the greatest crime, would not, I was assured by some of their own countrymen, as it was the season of Lent, touch any of the captured salt beef, although they were subject for many days to the most gnawing and distressing hunger.

“ Our voyage, owing to a succession of calms and contrary winds, became, at last, so painfully tedious and monotonous, that even the monstrous crocodiles lost their attractions, and the ducks, geese, ibis, and pelicans, which fluttered in myriads on the isles and shallow brink of the water, ceased to excite the least interest or notice.

“ At some of the villages where we tied up the boat, we tried to make short exploratory excursions ; but, after half-an-hour's brisk walk over those illimitable wastes, which stretch like a heaving and undulating sea far beyond the discoveries of modern geographical knowledge, all onward progress became impossible, and with aching limbs, and a few brace of tough pigeons, as the only result of our toil, we again returned to the boat, or dispelled our evening *ennui* close to some hovel, in friendly converse with groups of well-disposed natives.”

Fever now began its insidious attack on some of the party, who under great difficulties pursued their weary way. On the seventh day after leaving Khartoum, the passengers exchanged their river life for that of the wilderness. Over this district, a sub-Governor, responsible to the Governor of Khartoum, exercised authority ; and spoliation, imprisonment, murder, and every other form of crime and oppression, very generally prevailed. Strange were the aspect and manners of the inhabitants. In some instances, a rough hospitality was exercised ; but caution and watchfulness were continually needed, in their intercourse with the barbarous natives. On their way to *Kedaref*, the heat and malaria prostrated them, and occasioned much suffering.

“ Warm and glowing was the atmosphere when we set out, and warm and glowing it continued as we journeyed on. For several hours our route extended across an austere, furrowed and broken tract, where the poor camel at every few steps plunged into a hole or lost its balance in an empty ditch. The teasing reminiscences of former abundance only increased the present want, and the eye wandered in vain over the blighted plain, to espy a grateful well or

a grassy spot. We met on our way a good number of Arabs, who were returning to their desert homes from the market of Matamma, where they had been making purchases of horses, cows, honey, and wheat. They were all wiry and athletic figures, mounted on dromedaries and unsaddled horses, with their dishevelled hair streaming in the breeze, and their robust and muscular busts as low as the waist, exposed to the full play of the sun's dazzling rays. Their arms consisted of a long spear, an oval shield of hippopotamus' hide, and a straight double-edged sword, which was fastened on the pommel of the saddle, or hung suspended from a leather strap across the shoulder. On the whole, these tenants of the desert, unaffected by the vices which have corrupted the Bedouin in Syria and Lower Egypt, in their appearance, haughty air, accoutrements, and dress, realized most graphically the prophetic announcement: 'He will be a wild man.' Towards the decline of noon, we came to a little wood, and, without consulting our grumbling Arabs, coaxed our camels on their knees, and sought shelter in the gloomy thicket.

"Towards evening, we were off again. The road, which before had been difficult and dangerous, on account of the many yawning clefts, now became still more perilous and uncomfortable, owing to the many bushy and thorny trees which, at every few steps, threatened the traveller with the fate of Mohamed's coffin. As evening advanced, and the darkness increased in intensity, half-a-dozen of our camels got entangled in the copses, into which they had stupidly rushed to pluck some leaves; and before they could be extricated, our boxes came tumbling to the ground, while the camel-drivers exhausted their lungs in vile abuse. Half of our loads being already on the ground, the rest soon followed; so, our camels having selected the camping ground, we yielded to their good taste, and around a blazing fire re-arranged our luggage, and bedless and coverless, fell asleep on the hard and clodded soil. Long before daylight we were again mounted on our submissive quadrupeds, wending our doleful path between gum, doum, and the wide-spreading acacia, towards the river Rahad, where we intended to take in a supply of water, to last us till we reached Kedaref, a distance of three days' journey. I had hitherto, considering the toil and fatigue to which we were incessantly exposed, enjoyed tolerably good health; and, by practising a little caution and abstinence, I anticipated a continuance of the same blessing till we got into the mountains of Abyssinia; that very morning, however, I felt such a depression and weariness of body and spirit, that, notwithstanding our want of provisions, I could not muster sufficient energy to level my gun at the flocks of pigeons and guinea-fowl, which cackled and cooed as if they were unconscious of fear, and an exception to the coyness of their species.

"At mid-day we again approached the putrid waters of the exhausted Rahad, and alighted in a wood close to its banks, where

groups of uncouth-looking Arabs sat feasting round a camel that had broken its legs. Several of our party, who were in the excruciating agonies of ague, immediately threw themselves on the bare ground, which, instead of diminishing, only enhanced the cold shiver, and intensified the quivering sensation, of their fevered frame. I immediately hastened to unpack the medicine chest, and with emetics and copious doses of ipecacuanha, sought to arrest the sufferings of my companions, as well as my own incipient symptoms of a disease, which I knew to be frequently malignant in its character and fatal in its effects.

"Emetics and hot water were, however, alike unavailing; and, unconscious of all around, and in a kind of delirious stupor, I sustained for about four hours the prostrating paroxysms of cold and heat, which, on the return of sensibility, left me so weak, depressed, and suffering, that, in the language of another missionary, I longed 'to depart and be with Christ.'

"To protract our stay in that malarious jungle, haunted by the lion, and the no less violent and untamed roving Arab, was more dangerous than to proceed on our journey; and we had, therefore, no alternative but to be resigned to the misery which we could not avert, and the distracting agonies which we could not alleviate. Poor Cornelius, the mission assistant, who was chattering as if chilled by a Siberian frost, enlisted the liveliest interest of our camel-drivers, and they all fully anticipated that death would soon terminate his sufferings, and, according to Soudan custom, enrich them with his scanty wardrobe. Our journey in the evening and morning was still endurable, but when the fiery rays of a vertical sun began to stream down upon us, our agony was so intense that, compared to it, the torture of a treadmill would have been a delicious relaxation. At mid-day, we usually alighted in the shade of the granite rocks, which at various intervals, like watchtowers, dotted the plain, or under a tree, which marked the spot where a previous encampment had interred its dead. On the eve of the sixth day, we made our resting-place on a grassy plain near Kedaref, close to several shallow wells, whose brackish liquid afforded our parched and blistered lips ineffable draughts. Early in the morning (as I dreaded another attack of ague), to the annoyance of half-a-dozen ostriches who were quietly pecking their morning repast in the shrubs and herbage around, I mounted, and, accompanied by my sick Arab lad and the owner of two camels, hastened to *Suk Abou Sin*, a locality which derives its name from being the principal mart between the Atbara and Rahad, Galabat and Khartoum. In conformity with the unrestrained etiquette of the Soudan, I rode straight to the enclosure, in which stood the huts of Michel—a Copt—the only Christian in this district. Here, contrary to the inclination of his attendants, who, judging from my ragged garb, and meagre, sallow looks, were disposed to question my respectability, I was compelled to force an entrance within the thorny fence. Little Michel, swathed and

swaddled in unbleached calico and rainbow-coloured cotton shawls, looked the very type of all African diseases. I sympathetically inquired whether I could offer him any medicine, and, to my surprise and disgust, he requested me to bandage his arm, which two days before had been splintered by coming into too serious collision with the hard skull of a negro. The black fellow, who stood close by, so grinned and distorted his ebony countenance whilst his unfeeling taskmaster narrated his mishap, that, in spite of my own ills, I could scarcely retain a becoming gravity. I promised to render him all the assistance in my power, and then stretched myself on an *angareb*, where, for above two hours, I endured the cold of an iceberg, in a place where the thermometer was above 110 degrees in the shade.

"Abstinence from almost all food, and eighty grains of quinine during four successive days, subdued the fever, and enabled me to leave that lazar-house of vice, depravity, and crime. We started at noon, and proceeded in a south-easterly direction over an undulating country towards the village Assar, where, in the house of a Copt, we found a comfortable and hospitable night's refuge. From hence to Doka our route was diversified by forests and thickets, abrupt rising mounds, and fantastically shaped basalt-rocks. Deer, guinea-fowl, and doves, abounded everywhere; but we had such an aversion to animal food, that we gladly preferred the coffee-pot to the flesh-pot; and a thin piece of tough bread to the most inviting venison.

"Near Doka I had one of those narrow escapes from a serious accident, which on that, as on many former occasions, clearly indicated that a gracious Providence was watching over the safety, and directing the steps of the Missionary, through the wild and dreary jungles of Africa. It was just about noon, the time which we usually devoted to rest, when one of our camels, with the intense obstinacy and stupidity which these brutes occasionally manifest, rushed with two large boxes slung across its back into a dense thicket. A huge branch intercepted its progress, and brought cases and camel down into the shrubs and grass, which grew around the gnarled tree. My own vicious animal, in a spirit of emulation, bolted after its leader, and in spite of all my efforts to check its impetuosity, by tightening the rope round its muzzle, the unruly beast dashed through creepers and bushes till, at the heel of its companion, a jerk hurled me and the luggage down upon the prickly copse. Several of our people instantly hastened to my rescue, and, to their horror, they discovered close to my bleeding hands and face an affrighted boa, which for an instant glistened in the refracted rays, and then disappeared. They all now thought that I must enjoy the special favour of Heaven, whilst I was grateful to a gracious God for the miraculous escape from a dreadful fate."

Our travellers continued to realize, in their daily experience, the faithfulness of the divine declaration, "the Lord is thy keeper."



Preservation in the midst of danger, and relief from debilitating illness, were among the evidences of the unceasing care of their Heavenly Father. The object of their journey was ever present, and opportunities sought for setting before the barbarous people the revelation of love and mercy.

“With sunrise various chiefs from the Atbara, and the deserts bounded by the inlands of Abyssinia, came, either to settle accounts or to dilate on marauding expeditions. Our unexpected presence excited some dismal forebodings in the throbbing heart of a Sheikh or two, who, conscious of their enormities and crimes, thought they recognized in us the spies of the Egyptian Government, and heralds of their impending doom. Our numerous boxes, and the exhibition of several Arabic Bibles, however, convinced them of the peaceable character of our mission ; and I was assured by one and another Chief, that, if I passed through their territory, both they and their people would be my obedient slaves. Muallem Saad, a most kind, amiable, and thoroughly good man, a wonderful rarity among the degraded and unprincipled Copts, related to the assembled desert magnates what I had told him about Missions, and the wonderful changes they had effected in refining the corrupt nature, in ennobling the depraved heart, and in instructing the benighted minds of men, who once possessed not the slightest knowledge of God or heaven. They thought that this was a most meritorious work, and in tones of evident sincerity, they all offered me their spears and trusty warriors, if I would go and convert their neighbours the Shankgallas. I told them that a religion which is true and divine must convince the mind and win the heart, without the use of violence or force, and that this method of propagating the doctrines of the Angeel had been enjoined by Christ, and practised by his followers. ‘Our prophet,’ said the old scribe of the Kashef, ‘has not adopted the example of “Nebi Isau,” and this is the reason that Islamism despatches more hypocrites to hell than true Moslems to heaven.’

“Our short stay at Doka, where we were most hospitably entertained, and enjoyed the luxury of good air and an abundance of drinkable water, quite renovated our exhausted frames ; and with fresh vigour and energy we again tied the halter around the muzzles of our camels, and resumed betimes in the morning our march through forests and dense jungles, towards Galabat, or, as it is called by the Abyssinians, Matamma. Three hours’ ride brought us to Dagleish, where the violence of the heat compelled us to seek refuge from the noontide sun in a hut, which charity has taught the natives to attach to every settlement, for the accommodation of the wearied and exhausted wayfarer. The floor of this hospice, which numerous nests of ants had furrowed and raised for their own domicile, did not offer a very safe retreat ; but the Sheikh, accompanied by a detachment of his harem, brought angarebs (couches) and

large bundles of rushes ; and these few articles of African furniture soon diffused an air of comfort and cleanliness around our temporary shelter.

"Past noon we mounted again. Our path, which lay between forests of incense, tamarind, and sycamore trees, at every opening, unfolded to us the varied prospect of fields and plains, upland glades on which the shepherd tended his flock, and round hills on which some Arabs had raised their huts. This whole region, apparently so rich in natural beauty, and so bountifully provided with nature's most attractive gifts, is surrounded by an atmosphere of death, and inhabited by tribes of marauding and predatory habits. On my return from Abyssinia I passed by this same route, and on several spots I saw the mangled remains and the clotted gore of the poor victims who had been murdered the night previous by the Beni Nimmer, the children of the Tiger, as they are appropriately styled, who were hovering in the neighbourhood, plundering peaceable villages, and killing every traveller whom business led along that road. We saw several spies watching in the leafy branches of the trees, but the cheery songs of my escort, the rapid fire of my revolver, and the report of my being a friend of King Theodorus, whose liege subjects these freebooters claim to be, kept the Tiger and his followers at bay, and secured me a safe passage through that blood-stained territory.

"A cool and refreshing breeze, which sprang up at sunset, induced us to continue our march. Our camel-owners readily seconded our wish, and, till night closed in upon us, our progress was satisfactory to all ; but now, as the darkness became more intense, and the tortuous path lined with prickly shrubs and thorny trees, grew narrower, we were obliged, out of regard to our clothing and skin, to put a stop to our day's journey. The next day, at noon, wearied and fatigued, we reached *Matamma*, the last village on the Abyssinian frontier. Here we thought our hardships and toils would, if not terminate, be at least mitigated ; but, to our surprise, we found the Sheikh rude and sulky, and all his wild Tougrouree subjects in arms, and excited to the highest pitch of frenzy. Upon inquiry, we discovered that the panic which had turned the heads of old and young, women and children, was caused by the dread of a Tigrean invasion, to avenge the death of three hundred countrymen and co-religionists, who, a fortnight before, in an attempt to plunder the market, had fallen into an ambush, and were mercilessly slaughtered by their watchful enemies."

The firmans and letter from the Viceroy of Egypt, secured some attention from the despotic Sheikh of these parts. He had shown an unwillingness to extend any protection to the travellers, until these documents were produced. These people looked with surprise and contempt upon the Europeans, who were willing to pay



in wages, for the services of their attendants, a sum which would have sufficed to purchase the finest *Galla*, as a slave. Their trade in human flesh had destroyed every sense of justice and compassion, and rendered them insensible to the amicable relations which ought to exist amongst mankind.

"From here to *Wochnee*, the whole surface, occupying about sixty miles, is utterly destitute of all human habitations—of all signs of human life. The lion and tiger, the buffalo and rhinoceros, the elephant and giraffe, are the sole occupants of the whole region, and the traveller from every overhanging cliff can see the more bulky of these dwellers in the forest leisurely enjoying their noon-day siesta on the bank of some stream, or beneath a clump of shady trees. The caravans, which for about six months in the year pass and repass this solitary route, invariably travel in large parties, to ensure mutual protection against an attack of predatory *Tougrourees*, and the no less dangerous assaults of wild beasts. As our own party was not very strong, we marched almost without intermission, by day and night, an effort which, in our exhausted condition, made our limbs ache, and our heads throb with most agonizing pain.

"On the second morning, we descended through a long range of hills down into a steep, green wilderness; and from thence, between groves of bamboo, ebony, and different species of euphorbia, we rode on to *Wochnee*, which we reached ere the sun had mounted above the horizon. I had heard so much of *Wochnee*, that I expected to see a large village, occupied by an industrious, busy population; but, to my surprise, I found that the grand market of Western Abyssinia's trade is periodically held in the depth of a dense forest, where, even during the driest season, the luxuriant vegetation, hemmed in by steep, towering mountain-ranges, exhales from its humid soil a pestilential miasma. A few miserable huts, for the accommodation of the grim collectors of the duty, and the distillers of *detch* and *dallah*, were the only habitations visible in this wooded solitude. My companion, who had preceded me with letters, in order to prevent any possible detention in the lowlands, I found here in one of these miserable sheds, suffering from fever and a *coup-de-soleil*.

"The fate of a German, sent out last year by the Bishop of Jerusalem, who here found his grave, as did his son some days later at *Tschelga*, prompted me to expedite our journey up to the highlands; but, to our disappointment, when we were ready to quit that steaming jungle and hotbed of disease, the *Negad Ras*, or chief of the Custom, interdicted our onward movement, without the previous sanction of the King, or the express order of the Governor of the province. We had no inclination to submit to the penance imposed upon us by a sullen official; but as, to all our remonstrances, he only reiterated that it was a command of the *Negoos*, we were

obliged to chew the cud of our disappointment in patient resignation. On the fourteenth day, the impatiently-expected order at length arrived, and without any delay we hired donkeys, and, accompanied by a soldier from the Palambaras and a chief of the Kamants, set out for Tschelga.

"Our route, which was nearly due east, lay over huge mountains and wooded plains, rugged ravines and frowning rocks, so variegated and picturesque, that, in the beauty of each successive scene, the admiring eye imparted fresh vigour and elasticity to the wearied and exhausted frame. A few isolated rocks, with their flat summits, concealed in white misty clouds, like castellated towers, rose far above this magnificent landscape. The most conspicuous of all, the Zar Amba and Entchet Amba, are at present used as State prisons, but formerly they were the homes of captive royal princes.

"The report that Franks had arrived soon spread through the market, and the Cosagi, the hill we occupied, in a very few hours became the centre of attraction to Jews, Christians, and Kamants. The latter sect, who live almost exclusively in the province of Tschelga, are, on account of their indifference to the religious prejudices which one superstitious system has copied from the other, very much despised and misrepresented. I questioned a good number about their knowledge of God, and their hopes of eternity; but they had so little to communicate, beyond a belief in a Supreme Being and the existence of a future state, that the most simple query caused them the utmost wonder and surprise. They have some priests, and, at stated times, repair to certain places to perform secret acts of devotion; but, on the whole, their system of belief is devoid of every human ingredient and every Divine revelation, of every sensible object of adoration to impress the senses, and every spiritual truth to touch the heart. Their language is Amharic, but amongst themselves they speak in the Falasha tongue; and the striking Jewish features of many a man and woman amongst them inclined us to credit the report which assigns to them a Jewish origin."

The detention of the Missionaries, until leave could be obtained from the King, for their advance into the country, became wearisome and perplexing. Mr. Stern determined to visit the Governor of the province, whose residence at *Tschelga* was about seven hours' distance from their own camping ground. After a fatiguing scramble over almost perpendicular rocks and heights, they arrived at the imposing *Amba*, where the great man held his Court.

"We immediately dismounted, and, emulating the good example of other visitors, shouted to the soldiers and domestics, who were enjoying their siesta behind dislodged rocks, or taking an airing on the edge of fathomless precipices, that they should open the gates. The appearance and complexion of the stranger created quite a

sensation, and a whole troop of lazy fellows, with straining eyes and gaping mouths, looked at me across the ravine as if a being from a different planet had suddenly tumbled amongst them. I reiterated my request, and at last one of the savages, more courageous than the rest, moved out of the line of terrified gazers, to announce my arrival. During this interval, to the amusement of the subordinate governors and their suites, who could not comprehend why a man should walk when he could leisurely squat down and rest, I took a stroll over this upper plain, to have full sight of the matchless scene, on which the eye so delightedly rested. From the altitude on which we stood, we had a range to our vision which must have embraced more than 150 miles in circumference. There, on our left, towards the south-east, lay the rich plain of Dembea, bounded by the placid waters of the Tzanza, and the Alpine range of the Guna, with its summit 14,670 feet above the level of the sea, clearly defined towards a blue, cloudless horizon; on our right, close on the rear of the Amba, in a north-westerly direction, as if arrested in their heaving and surging by the fiat of Omnipotence, rose out of an agitated and restless ocean of green foliage, the wave-like mounds and hills of Armatgioho intersected by wooded valleys and dark chasms, whilst on the outskirts of this magnificent region, faintly discernible through the hazy atmosphere, extended beyond the eyes' ken, an unsightly and desolate waste of blight and sterility. My ramble was brought to a close by a messenger whom the Palambaras had despatched to conduct me across the narrow path which united the Amba with the plateau. Arrived on the opposite side, we passed a low gateway constructed of massive blocks of wood, and then, on the edge of the yawning precipice, which was protected by a parapet of loose stones, we scaled the height of this rampart of nature, and, between rows of ragged servants and lazy soldiers, made our way to the audience-chamber of the Governor of Western Abyssinia.

"The building, in which all the business of an important province was transacted, resembled in appearance a circular haystack on a magnified scale. At my entrance, every inch of ground was crowded with officials, visitors, and litigants, who, by being closely packed together, so effectually excluded every ray of light which might have forced its way through the interstices of the wicker framework that, in my endeavours to steer safely through the invisible throng towards the *alga* of the Chief, I stumbled over several greasy and slippery figures, and might perhaps have ended my adventurous walk in the dark, on the heads of half-a-dozen indignant and mortified Shums, had not the Palambaras extended his hand, and drawn me towards a small recess which he occupied. After a few desultory questions of no importance, the Court again resumed its sitting, and plaintiffs and defendants in dozens leaped on their feet, to display their forensic skill. The boisterous debates of the passionate litigants did not in the least disturb the

calm dignity of the Judge, or deter him from pronouncing a prompt, and, I believe, also correct decision, in the most entangled cases. Now and then a disappointed suitor ventured to express his dissent from the verdict, a presumption which led to his immediate ejection from the Court, and not unfrequently a sound application of the hippopotamus whip to his nude back ; whilst, on the contrary, the gainer in the action threw himself on all-fours, and with his drooping forehead on the foul rushes which served for a carpet, gave vent to the overflowing gratitude of his heart in a long string of unmeaning and sham blessings.

“The incessant wrangling, close atmosphere, and offensive odours, which pervaded this hall of justice, made my feverish frame long to breathe again the invigorating breeze, I heard sighing among the dry leaves and branches woven in the circular walls of the hut ; but the difficulty was how to effect my object without creating confusion, or, what was equally difficult, without bringing my heavy boots in collision with some naked feet and swinging bodies. I signified my intention to the Palambaras, who, instead of acceding to the request, waved his hand to half a score of soldiers, and in an instant high and low, shums and officers, were helter-skelter, with the exception of a priest, who held a brass cross in his hand, ejected from the court.

“Being now alone, the worthy Chief seized a pair of English double-barrelled pistols, which lay charged beneath his pillow, and in a kind of peremptory style requested me to explain to him the manufacture of such beautiful arms. I was about to pour forth my whole stock of knowledge on this subject, when one of my Abyssinian companions, who had been in Syria and Egypt, interrupted me, and, in a strain so confused and bewildering, launched out on steam, telegraphs, and cannons, that I was not at all astonished to see the poor priest making the sign of the cross, and the Palambaras himself own that work done by the seething, bubbling, and whirling of water and fire could not be free from the agency of the *gente a basso*. I endeavoured to slide the conversation into a more serious groove, and had partly succeeded, when suddenly a procession of half-a-dozen slaves brought in a wicker basket of bread and black fiery sauce, concocted of capsicums, onions, dried peas, and other palatable ingredients. Seven hours’ ride and a long fast had given me and my companions an excellent appetite, and a crouching *Galla* had to ply his unwashed hands for a considerable time in the hot paste, in order to soften a sufficient quantity of leathery cakes for his master’s famished guests. During the repast, the Palambaras eyed me very keenly, and on perceiving that, I guessed the import of his gaze, he candidly confessed that his eyes had been riveted on my printed calico shirt, which he thought, as I had an abundance of upper garments, I could well leave him as a memento of our friendship. I readily promised to accede to this request ; but instead of divesting myself then and there of this important

article of dress, as he anticipated, I postponed satisfying his cupidity till my return to Tschelga. He instantly ordered two servants to accompany me, and, with many iterated asseverations that he would ensure me a favourable reception by the King, which I subsequently learnt was mere brag, I retraced my steps to our lonely camping ground on the Cosagi.

The expectations of our Missionary friend were about to be realized. He received an intimation that the King had accomplished the object of his distant expedition, and that he should prepare for the announcement that he might proceed on his way.

"My companion being too weak and indisposed for a twenty-eight hours' unintermitted ride, I left him in charge of the luggage, and, by the light of myriads of sparkling stars, proceeded with some trusty natives on my doleful journey. The grey dawn was just unveiling the dark ridges of the Begedemer mountain-range, when we came to the Quanque, the boundary line between Tschelga and Dembea.

"This river, which has its rise in the hills of Dagossa, half an hour's distance west of the Tzanza, had, when we crossed it, scarcely more than two feet depth of water; but during the rainy season, the numerous torrents which roll into it render it a formidable stream before it debouches into the Atbara. Along its banks coal-mines of a very superior quality abound; even those pieces which lay strewn over the ground, and had become calcined by the action of the sun, on being lighted, burned with a fervent heat. Some shepherds, who were tending their flocks on the rich pasture-land of these extensive plains, cheerfully supplied us with an abundance of excellent milk, and after a brief halt and this substitute for coffee, I leaped again into my clumsy saddle, and rode away."

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THEODORUS OF ABYSSINIA.

The time was at hand, when Mr. Stern was about to meet the potent King of Abyssinia. Suspense, impatience and anxiety, had produced some despondency, when tidings reached him that the King had returned from an expedition into *Tigré*, and an order given that the travellers should, without delay, repair to the royal camp at *Lamgie*, on the eastern shore of the lake *Tzanza*. After encountering some hindrances from the people, and traversing with difficulty rugged and pathless hills and valleys, he reached the spot at which King Theodorus and his troops were encamped. The army were collected together in a narrow plain, between two chains of mountains. Mr. Bell, an Englishman, of whom more will be related hereafter, was in the employ of the King, and held a high rank in the royal army; and to his tent the Missionary was conducted. The cordial and friendly welcome which he received, cheered and refreshed him. He was here informed that the King had determined to give him an audience on the following day. It was with considerable anxiety that he looked forward to this interview, on which so much depended. These anxieties were relieved by the very encouraging reception accorded to him, and which was such as to inspire him with confidence as to the happy result of his mission.

“Punctual to the engagement, the King sent for me on the following morning, and, accompanied by Mr. Bell, I repaired to the royal presence. As the weather was cool and refreshing, His Majesty had left the tent, and, surrounded by scores of his nobles, paced up and down on a green-sward facing the *Tzanza*. On approaching this spot, I uncovered my head, and, in a deferential

attitude, paused at about fifty yards distance from the royal presence. With the greatest courtesy, the King beckoned me to come nearer; a condescension towards a Frankish priest which made many a haughty Chief sneer; and then, in a tone of the utmost affability, he interrogated me about the various countries I had visited, the character of the people, and the religions they professed. That a Christian nation like the English should tolerate idolatry in India, and uphold the power of Mohammedanism in Egypt and Turkey, he could not understand; and as politics and religion are synonymous terms in Abyssinia, I thought it advisable merely to observe, that Christianity taught us to love, and not to persecute; to instruct, and not to oppress an unbeliever. '*Avoonat! avoonat!*' ('True! true!') he exclaimed; 'and if this is your design in Abyssinia, you have my approval to your mission, if you likewise obtain the assent of the *Aboona*.' On my craving permission to travel in his realm, in case the Metropolitan countenanced the object which had brought me to Abyssinia, he instantly replied, 'I am your brother and friend, and you have my full sanction to visit every province in my kingdom.'"

At this time, the ruler of Abyssinia had reached the zenith of prosperity and success. His previous life and history were well known. The courage and daring which had raised him from insignificance to the throne, had excited the awe as well as the admiration of his subjects. From a variety of sources, Mr. Stern had received circumstantial information concerning the events of his reign, and of the acts of heroism on the one hand, and cruelty on the other, by which it had been distinguished. When he recorded these things, for the information of English readers, how little could he have conceived, that there was even a possibility of a weapon being thereby forged against his life and well-being! In the light of the present, we are often led to form unjust conclusions concerning the acts of the past. But those acts may be legitimate and even desirable, which in the current of events, are proved to be fraught with danger and tribulation.

"The name of King Theodorus, though familiar to the Arab and the Galla—the peasant on the Nile, in the west, and the wild shepherd on the desert along the Red Sea, in the east—is still, owing to the remoteness of his country, and the obscurity of his people, little known to Europe and European fame. We hear of him, whenever a volcanic eruption occurs on the outskirts of his territory, or French emissaries, prompted by religious zeal and political intrigue, excite a rebel's fatal hope in *Tigré*; but little, very little, is still known about the eventful and romantic history of the man, who, from a

poor boy, in a reed-built convent, became the chief of a few freebooters, and from a chief of freebooters, the conqueror of numerous provinces, and the Sovereign of a great and extensive realm.

“King Theodorus, the present ruler of Abyssinia, was born in Quara, a small province on the western borders of Amhara. His father, Hailu Weleda Georgis, though a reputed scion of Queen Saba's royal line, acquired no distinction in life, and awakened no sympathy or regret at his death. The small fortune of the deceased nobleman was soon seized and wasted by greedy relations, and the poor mother of Kasa (the surname of the future King), like numbers more in that demoralized country, where love is seldom hallowed by the religion that belongs to it, was, ere long, driven by want to eke out a miserable subsistence, by the sale of *kosso*, whilst the tender object of her affection found a refuge in a convent at Tschangar, twelve hours south-west of Gondar. In this asylum the young orphan might have spent some years in dreary indolence and life-sapping inactivity, had not Dejatch Marou, a defeated rebel, invaded the sanctuary, burned all its huts, and by killing and mutilating helpless boys, glutted his cowardly vengeance on their victorious parents. Kasa eluded the inhuman cruelty of the dastardly foe, and, under the covert of night, gained the house of his powerful uncle, Dejatch Confu.

“In this chieftain's home, which was the rendezvous of scheming and discontented rebels, the ardent youth imbibed an enthusiastic love of war, and a passionate ambition for daring and dangerous exploits. His courage, which knew no fear, and shrunk from no obstacle, soon secured him the favour of his guardian, and the admiration of his troops; and the late aspirant for precarious honours in the Church might have attained the highest dignity in the State, had not death deprived him of his potent guardian and generous benefactor. The two sons and heirs of Confu, as it will also sometimes happen in other lands, had hardly consigned the mortal remains of their parent to their last resting-place, when they began to fight and quarrel about the patrimony.

“Dejatch Beru Goshu, the valiant, crafty, and plotting Governor of Damot and Godjam, eagerly watched the issue of this insane fratricidal strife, and when the whole province had been reduced to anarchy, confusion, and disorder, he invaded it with his lawless hordes, and, almost without any resistance, made himself master of the most fertile and populous parts of Abyssinia. Kasa, who had joined the partisans of the elder brother, fled before the ferocious and unsparing conqueror to Sarago, in Alava, where, concealed in the hut of a kind peasant, he eluded for more than a month the pursuit of the ruthless foe. It is narrated that, some years later, when Kasa's military successes and triumphs had achieved for him the title of Dejatch, he was sent to Alava, to repress and quell an insurrection in that district. The rebels, without resistance, were awed into submission; and, to prevent any future troubles, every

insurgent was mulcted in a penalty of feeding for a week, half a score or more of voracious troops. Kasa's former benefactor refused to receive the unwelcome guests, and upon being dragged before the Chief, he was instantly recognised by the recipient of his bounty, and, amidst the plaudits of the soldiery, exalted to the Shumat of Sarago, and rewarded with the gift of twenty dollars, eight oxen, eight cows, and eight male and female slaves.

"To return from our digression. We find Kasa, after his escape from Beru Goshu's bloodhounds, at the head of a band of seventy robbers, in the marshy and malarious borders of the western kolla, or lowland, subsisting on the illicit gains of bloodless highway robberies. The banditti, weary of their leader's strict discipline, conspired against his life; but before they could perpetrate their fell deed, the secret was divulged, and, in a terrible encounter, Kasa, with a few bravos, disabled and routed his enemies. With this small band of trusty and faithful followers, he now joined Derar, another desperado, and these two boon companions for some months were the terror of the Tougrourees, and the scourge of all the Khowadgees, or Mohammedan merchants, on the road between Wochnee and Matamma.

"He became disgusted with this vocation which, however, was not disreputable in a lawless and disorganized country. He had so much sense of moral rectitude, that he soon shrank in perfect horror from a freebooter's trade, and returned again to an honest livelihood in his own native place. The bold exploits and gallant feats, which had rendered the robber's name famous throughout Abyssinia and the Soudan, attracted crowds of needy, disaffected, and improvident Chiefs and soldiers around him; and the daring bandit, whose strong arm and ambitious heart could not well brook the narrow bounds of a farmer's home, again seized his sword, and, under the pretence of checking oppression and restraining violence, unfurled the standard of rebellion.

"The Waisero Menin, mother of Ras Ali, and nominally Queen of all the provinces west of the Taccazy, now began to dread the growing power of Kasa, and, prompted by deep, passionate animosity, which invariably characterized her proceedings towards those who defied her authority, or did not minister to her revolting excesses, she despatched a large army to crush, as she said, 'the *kosso* vendor's son.' Informed of the expedition, Kasa, without delay, hastened to meet the enemy; but no sooner did the latter come in sight of their opponents, than they were seized with a panic, and fled to Dembea. The cunning woman had now recourse to intrigue, and the witchery of soft blandishments, which she had often found more powerful than her armies, to entrap a formidable enemy; but Kasa, who saw the bait by which he was to be caught, met all these overtures with indifference or polite evasion. Baffled and embarrassed, the treacherous Queen was more than ever intent upon revenging herself on the presumptuous rebel, and as open

violence and crafty art had equally failed, she did not shrink from compassing the redoubtable Chieftain's death at the high price of her own grandchild's honour, the daughter of Ras Ali, whom she gave him in marriage. The young wife, instead of abetting the infamous design of her grandmother, with a constancy and affection seldom witnessed in that demoralized country, foiled every attempt on her beloved husband's life, by diverting the dangers which threatened him to herself.

"About this time the Arabs near the borders, conscious of their neighbours' intestine feuds and quarrels, made several inroads on Abyssinian settlements, an affront which the Queen commissioned Kasa, who had resided in the country, to revenge. The bold Chief obeyed the order; and, with an army badly equipped and inferior in number, he unexpectedly fell upon the infuriated Arabs and their Egyptian auxiliaries, and, reckless of life, maintained for several hours an unequal and destructive conflict. His thinning ranks and a serious wound compelled him to retreat, but the valour he had displayed during the fiery contest struck terror and awe into the hearts of the victors, and they allowed their enemies to retreat from the field of battle without any attempt to impede their march, or to make prisoners of the fugitive forces. The remains of this forlorn hope, who were either wounded or afflicted with fever, on reaching the mountains of Tschelga, Kasa immediately sent to quarters in the districts and villages along the Tzanza, whilst he himself proceeded to Tschangar, to have his wounds cured by a physician of that place. A good reeking piece of *broundo* being better adapted to an Abyssinian constitution than all the horrid drugs and sickening concoctions which civilization has discovered, the *Æsculapius* of Tschangar informed his patient that he could not extract a ball which an infidel Arab had lodged in his side, nor restore him to his wonted health and vigour, unless he first received a fat cow and a large jar of butter. Kasa thought the doctor's prescription a good opportunity to remind the Queen that he was still in the land of the living; but, as that dissolute and rancorous woman anticipated that, the wound or poison would speedily rid her of an implacable foe, she sent him a joint of beef, with a sarcastic message, that men of his rank and quality were not entitled to a whole cow.

"Frantic with rage at this fresh insult, the wounded Chief impatiently bided the few days the faithful leech required for his recovery, and when this was successfully effected, he hastily flew to Quara, where he assembled his trusty followers, and before the Queen could, through the mediation of her niece, appease the wrath she had so causelessly provoked, a rebel army was on its way to Dembea and Gondar. Convinced that no expression of regret, and no assurance of royal favour, could heal the breach or avert the impending struggle, the Queen, with the prompt vigour and energy which she had so often displayed when beset by danger, despatched



a strong force to intercept the rebels' progress, and to destroy their leader. The hostile armies met near Tschako, and, in a fierce engagement which took place the same day, the Royalists sustained a most signal and complete defeat. Kasa, besides a vast number of prisoners, captured, what was of inestimable value to him, more than a thousand muskets. Amongst the prisoners was a proud Chief, named Dejatch Wonderad, who, in a council of war at Gondar, loudly boasted that he would bring the *kosso* vendor's son alive or dead to the foot of the throne. Kasa, to whom Wonderad's speech was reported, sent for him during the evening, and, to the amazement of all present, handed him a dose of the obnoxious though harmless draught, adding, in a tone of biting sarcasm, 'As my mother did no business to-day, you will accept *kosso* instead of *teff* for your evening repast.'

"A war à l'outrance now began to rage all over Western Abyssinia. The Queen, anxious to retrieve past failures and to recover lost territory, assumed the generalship of her own army, and at Balaha, near the Tzanza, she fell unexpectedly upon the foe with a violence, resolution, and bravery, that defied all resistance, and overcame every opposition. Unfortunately, the pusillanimous Chiefs did not emulate the heroism of their fearless Queen, and the combat, thus auspiciously commenced, was so supinely pursued, that it ignominiously terminated in the flight of the imperial troops, and the captivity of their bold and undaunted commander.

Ras Ali, the son of the Waisero, and father-in-law of Kasa, keenly smarted under the disgraceful imprisonment of his mother, and the check to his own aspirations after a crown; but as he thought it imprudent to incense a foe dreaded by his Chiefs, and regarded as invincible by his troops, he hung up the sword, and had recourse to diplomacy. Kasa, who to an impetuous temper unites a generous heart, readily yielded to the Ras's suggestions; and, on condition that under the title of Dejatch he should hold the conquered provinces as fiefs of the Crown, he at once gave liberty to the Princess, and peace to the troubled and distracted empire.

"A peace obtained by craft could not be of long duration; and in 1853, scarcely two years after the battle of Balaha, Kasa was formally superseded in his government, and proclaimed a traitor and a rebel. This outrageous breach of a solemn pledge excited universal indignation among the Dejatch's partisans, and the soldier as well as the peasant burned to revenge on a licentious Queen and her perfidious son, the wrongs of their admired hero, and the insults of their beloved Chief. The demon of civil war, once evoked, soon convulsed the whole kingdom, and every one, young and old—the needy, who coveted plunder, and the ambitious, who sought promotion—all spurred on by different motives, hastened to take part in a conflict, which was to decide the fate of the throne and the destiny of the reigning family. At Aishal, in Dembea, a

most sanguinary and destructive battle was fought between the rival forces. Ras Ali, as Mr. Bell, who was in the engagement, told me, displayed a bravery and daring that elicited general admiration; but, notwithstanding the despairing effort of the fated Chief, the rule of the licentious semi-Christian *Galla* usurpers had reached its goal, and before night their last descendant was a fugitive for life, whilst his despised foe remained victor of the field and gainer of the crown.

“The conqueror at Aishal now marched to Quami Tscherk, in Godjam, to revenge his own and his country’s sufferings on the ruthless Beru Goshu. In the evening preceding the engagement, which freed Abyssinia from a dreaded and remorseless Chieftain, Kasa and his brother officers were discussing, over some reeking joints of *brounda*, the merits of their respective troops, when one of the principal magnates replied, ‘What need we to fear? Since no one can resist us, how much less you, our dauntless and gallant leader?’ Kasa instantly threw himself on his face, and, in the midst of his hardened companions of war, exclaimed, in a solemn tone of voice, ‘I praise thee, O God, that thou has manifested thy goodness to a poor sinner like me! Whom thou humblest is humbled, and whom thou exaltest is exalted. Thine is the power and glory for ever and ever.’ The next day Beru Goshu was captured, and, with a stone round his neck, led into the presence of the fugitive whose life he had formerly sought to destroy. The magnanimous Chief ordered a cloth to be spread for his captive, and, in most condescending language, asked him what fate he would have awarded him if their fortunes had been reversed. Beru Goshu sullenly replied, ‘You would have been executed.’ This bold and unexpected retort brought a score of swords out of their sheaths; but the conqueror, instead of approving the rage of the nobles by whom he was surrounded, publicly acknowledged the Divine goodness which, more than the valour of his troops, had saved him from such a cruel death.

“During these events, the prisoner’s wife, unconscious of her husband’s fate, together with a considerable number of troops, bravely repulsed every assault on the rock, where they had entrenched themselves. Kasa, anxious to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood, sent the prisoner, his two brothers-in-law, and several dignitaries, to solicit the lady, on the peril of her own and the lives of those near and dear to her, to put an end to hostilities by evacuating the rock. The affectionate wife laconically replied, ‘Let Kasa take the Amba; but let him not give me back my husband.’ The request was granted, and Beru Goshu will no doubt, to the end of his days, bemoan, on the isolated summit of the Zar Amba, the conjugal indifference of his treacherous and false partner.

“The ambition of Kasa grew as his power increased, and since the western provinces were now all united under his sway, he cast a

longing eye on *Tigré* and *Shoa*, two powerful states, which, since the reign of Tecla Georgis, in 1780, had maintained the independence of their Governments, and the administration of their respective laws. Dejatch Oubie, the governor of *Tigré*, anticipated Kasa's intention, and, to avoid a surprise, he assembled a well-organized army, and, amidst the alpine heights of Semien, awaited the enemy's approach. On a cold, raw, and stormy day, in February, 1856, the Amhara forces, after a long and fatiguing march, came in sight of the wide-spreading outlines of Oubie's well-ordered camp. With that activity and promptitude which marked all his movements, Kasa at once marshalled his army in battle array, and, contrary to their expectations and remonstrances, ordered them to charge the enemy. At this command a loud murmur of discontent broke from the serried lines of his fierce warriors, and for some moments Kasa himself stood appalled at these symptoms of fear and insubordination; but as, in the fortune of that day, the prospects of a crown were involved, the resolute Chief, in that clear and confident tone of voice which had often done him more service than the sword he so bravely wields, rode in front of his army, and, in a short address, in which he recapitulated to the breathless multitude their former glorious achievements, he defiantly added, 'And now, after all our numerous conquests, does yonder rheumatic dotard chill your prowess? Do yonder guns, charged with powder and rags, cow your souls? Are yonder rocks and chasm a barrier to your bravery? Follow me, and to-morrow by this time my name will be no more Kasa but Theodorus, for God has given me the kingdom.' Reanimated by the words of their dauntless leader, the countless host rushed on the expectant foe, who welcomed them with a shower of iron balls and well-aimed spears. The groans of the dying and the war-shouts of the living,—the echoes of the cliffs and the rolling thunder of the storm, all combined to make that day one of the most terrible in the annals of Abyssinian warfare.

"Evening was fast approaching, and the shades of night were beginning to confound friend and foe, still the desperate struggle raged with unabated ardour, and the carnage continued with unmitigated fury. Oubie, who had on that day evinced a generalship and gallantry that recalled to many a scarred head the deeds of their former adored Sabagadis, was at last, unknown to his soldiers, forced, by exhaustion and age, to seek a brief rest in a deep dell, at the outskirts of the battle-field. This almost unguarded retreat was discovered by a detachment of Kasa's troops, and before the old Chief could recover from the sudden surprise, he was seized and carried in triumph to the enemy's camp. The *Tigréans*, bewildered and panic-stricken at their leader's captivity, were immediately thrown into the utmost consternation, and before the different Chiefs could summon courage to rally their disordered retainers, some had sought safety in flight, others in passive submission, and not a few in a soldier's honourable grave.

“On the following day, February 4th, Kasa besieged the Amba Boahil, 13,500 feet above the level of the sea; and on the 5th, he was crowned, under the name of King Theodorus, in the Church Mariam Deresgie, by the Aboona Salama, the Metropolitan of Abyssinia. After the coronation, the royal troops took possession of the Amba Hai, on whose summit, of 14,000 feet altitude, Oubie kept his treasures. Here, to their agreeable surprise, they found two cannons, seven thousand muskets, a great quantity of gold and silver plate, and about forty thousand Austrian dollars, besides a vast quantity of copper vessels, and a countless number of coloured Venetian bottles, which the Abyssinian gentry use instead of wine glasses, in drinking their hydromel.

“The King having appointed a governor over the conquered province, retraced his steps to Gondar, from whence, after a brief respite from incessant toil and fatigue, he directed his march southward towards the Wollo Galla country—the old enemies of his creed, and for a long period the ruthless oppressors of his people. Elated with former successes, and confident in their military prowess, the Wollos, who are divided into *saba beit*, or seven clans, at once united their strength to oppose a foe whose power and warlike skill they had just cause to dread.

“At Saga Gora, the royal forces came in contact with Adara Bille, the treacherous host of Dr. Krapf; and in the very first charge the Abyssinians, led to the onslaught by their martial Sovereign, displayed a courage which struck terror into the hearts of their oppressors, and made them shrink from encountering a foe, whose natural animosity long years of relentless tyranny had stimulated to a pitch, bordering on a kind of religious frenzy. Adara Bille and upwards of a thousand Gallas fell in battle, or perished under the executioner's knife, whilst the country around was plundered, and the poor women and children carried captive into the various provinces of Abyssinia. The Wollo Galla, after this defeat, did not renew the contest; but, chafed and dispirited, they precipitately fled to their mountain fastnesses, to brood over their late disaster, and to concert means for future action. Well acquainted with the treacherous character of his foes, the King, in anticipation of their wily design, at once fortified the Amba Magdala, which rises 3,500 feet above the level of the surrounding scene, and then, leaving a garrison strong enough to check any sudden inroad upon his conquered territory, he turned towards Shoa, the only province in Abyssinia which still maintained the independence of its government and regal power.

“The fierce and proud Shoaner, although they professed the most supreme scorn for the *kosso* vendor's son, yet did not neglect to make every preparation, and to adopt the most effective measures to oppose his onward progress. Their army, which consisted of upwards of fifty thousand brave and valiant troops, was, in regard to numbers, superior to that of the King; but the enthu-



siasm which prompted the assailants did not animate their opponents, for, whilst the latter felt that they were about to fight for a Monarch who revelled in shameless vice and hateful excesses, the former were ready to shed their life's blood for a Sovereign beloved for his manly virtues, and venerated, nay, almost idolized, for his dauntless heroism.

"On the plain of Bala Worka the long-delayed conflict took place. The Shoaner, anxious to maintain their old renown for bravery, rushed to the charge with a courage that defied all resistance, and yielded to no opposition. Their uncontrolled passions, however, blinded their judgment, and made them deaf to the commands of their leaders, and thus their savage bloodthirstiness turned what seemed to promise victory into a disgraceful and complete defeat. Hailo Malakat, the successor of Sahale Sellasie, died ere the disastrous intelligence arrived, and his son Menelek yielded himself a voluntary captive to the conqueror.

"The revolution, which wrested the several distracted and misgoverned provinces from the grasp of petty tyrants, and brought them under the sway of a powerful and energetic ruler, being now consummated, the King left his royal prisoner to be the companion of his son at the Amba Magdala, and then hastened back to Gondar, where he spent the rainy season in redressing the grievances, and in reforming the abuses of former reigns."

Such is the historical sketch, given by Mr. Stern's pen, of one of the most remarkable men who ever reigned over the destinies of the people of Abyssinia. He had received the Missionary with a condescension and kindness which exceeded his expectations. He had sanctioned his mission, and commended him to the regard of the Head of the Abyssinian Church. All this might have led a less discerning man, and one who had but a superficial acquaintance with the nature and character of the human heart, to arrive at the most encouraging conclusions concerning what the future might bring forth. But Mr. Stern perceived, that the country was under the sway of a despot, the victim of caprice and unbridled passion. The smiles of to-day might rapidly disappear before the frowns of the morrow, and the protection which seemed to be secured by every pledge and promise, might be followed by cruel and tyrannical oppression. It was to be his lot to drink to the very dregs of the bitter cup of suffering, of which he found that so many, even under favourable circumstances, had so frequently to partake. Such a scene as the following was the sequence to an interview, in which the crafty monarch spoke with apparent sincerity of his interest in the Missionary's work:—



“Business of importance induced me, the following morning, to repair again to the Palace. The King was just about to leave Gondar, and that too, as I understood from the ominous and suppressed whispers of the people, in no very good temper. This change in his deportment from that of the previous day, was attributed to the discovery of several muskets and other property, belonging to a rebel Chief. Two monks, a *debtterah* and a priest, charged with secreting them, were, without trial and without shrift, condemned to immediate death. The furious Monarch, to strike terror into the hearts of his rebellious subjects, ordered the criminals to have their hands and feet cut off; and so stern were his commands, that not even a drop of water was allowed them in their feverish death-struggle.

“News of a rebellion in Godjam forced him again to the field. Goaded to desperation by these perpetual revolutions, his fiery temper burst through every bond of humanity, and most atrocious and revolting deeds were, regardless of sex and station, perpetrated on the hapless victims of his vengeance. The rebellion was crushed in blood, but the sting of remorse rankled deep in the heart of the despot; and when, in the ensuing year, his affectionate and tenderly-attached Queen died, he publicly acknowledged that he had suffered a just retribution for his cruelty towards the women of Godjam, and made a solemn vow never more to allow passion to blind his intellect, and to steel his heart.”

On one occasion, Mr. Stern attended to offer his congratulations on the marriage of the King, to the daughter of his former captive, Ras Oubie of Tigré. The expressions of good-will which fell from the lips of the Monarch did not close the eyes of his well-wisher to the severities of his rule. The illustration of that severity occurred immediately after this visit of ceremony, and is placed in juxtaposition with some other corresponding facts. It was in these terms that the King spake:—

“‘My people are bad; they love rebellion and hate peace; delight in idleness, and are averse to industry; but, if God continues to me my life,’ added he with glowing ardour, ‘I will eradicate all that is bad, and introduce all that is salutary and good.’ We spontaneously breathed our ‘Amen’ to this hopeful prophecy of a man, who certainly has the will and inclination to raise his country from its present moral, social, and religious degradation; though, unfortunately, his defective education, uncontrollable ambition, and hasty temper, must all undergo a severe discipline, ere he can prove himself—as his flatterers pretend—worthy of the title and noble achievements which are to inaugurate, according to an old legend, the golden reign of the great Theodorus.”

After this we read:—"Suddenly piercing shrieks and yells, from the direction of the Imperial residence, broke startlingly on my ears. I listened for some time; but, as every minute the groans and cries of agony rung more and more dismally from rock and hill, I soon left the tent and proceeded towards the spot from whence the screams proceeded. The cracking of the formidable giraffe (a whip about five feet long, cut out of the hide of the hippopotamus), and the supplications for mercy, which I could now distinctly hear, warned me that the Monarch was up, and administering justice. Actuated by curiosity, I stealthily took my position behind a prickly shrub, and from this unobserved retreat, I saw about a dozen figures, each with his arms so tightly pinioned that the blood must have almost spirted out of the trembling fingers, whilst on each side stood a soldier to support the hapless culprit during the executioner's ruthless task. At every stroke of the lash, the poor wretches uttered the most heartrending moans; but neither the wail of distress, nor the lacerated and bleeding backs of the victims, inspired any commiseration, or mitigated the severity of their punishment. My eyes involuntarily turned from this appalling sight, whilst my heart breathed the fervid prayer, that the Gospel of love might ere long reform the cruel laws which at present rule the inhabitants of this country.

"The King's relentless severity towards rebels and traitors does not, however, in the least damp the aspiration for power, or the passion for dominion. Men and women are continually scourged and mutilated; whole legions of wild hordes are sent to desolate and lay waste suspected and disaffected districts; whole clans are proscribed and outlawed; and yet all these extreme measures and sanguinary edicts fail to enforce obedience, or to win the nation's fealty. On October 31, 1860, three thousand rebels, with their leader, Gerat, were defeated by the royal troops near the western bank of the Taccazy, and mercilessly butchered in cold blood; in fact, so inexorable was the king, that even their wives and children—contrary to former custom—were indiscriminately condemned to perpetual slavery."

Theodorus had been enlarging on his good intentions towards his people, and this was the corollary to his professed anxieties for

their welfare. Whether sincerely, or under the mere impulse of the moment, he seemed at times to be influenced by right motives, and by some measure of sound knowledge.

“In the afternoon, Mr. Bell and myself were summoned to the royal tent, where, for some time, we conversed on several of the most important articles of our faith. I was quite astonished to find that his Majesty was well acquainted with many portions of God’s Holy Word; and though his religious knowledge partook deeply of the superstitions and errors of his Church, yet it was quite evident that he had studied the Bible, and had also received a good impression from its sacred contents. I mentioned to him some of the results of modern missions, and if he had won a great battle, he could not have manifested greater delight and pleasure than he expressed on hearing of the achievements of the Gospel, and the triumphs of the Cross.

“During our conversation, I incidentally alluded to the promise, ‘Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.’ On hearing this quotation, his whole countenance, usually stern and grave, assumed a happy and smiling expression, and, as if engaged in some deep reflection, he made a short pause in our conversation, and then exclaimed, in a tone in which mistaken piety and ardent zeal were evidently blended, ‘Let God give victory to my arms, and peace to my empire, and the Cross shall not lack support in this country!’”

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## CHAPTER XXII.

THE ABOONA. THE ABYSSINIAN CHURCH. GENDA.

The protection of King Theodorus, and permission to Mr. Stern to carry on his work amongst the Jews, was made conditional on the concurrence of the Head of the Abyssinian Church. The intolerance of the ecclesiastics presented great, if not insuperable difficulties to its attainment, and it is possible that it would have failed in the hands of one who possessed less tact and ability. Protected, as that fallen Church was, by the authority and adherence of an autocratic potentate, any attempt to proceed without the sanction of the *Aboona* would have been futile, and even dangerous.

To attain this end, Mr. Stern moved onward from point to point, journeying in the direction of *Tshatshako* and *Magdala*. The reputation of the renowned fortress was anything but encouraging. His servants and companions regarded it with a natural dread, for it had been made the prison-house of the unfortunate, and the scene of Theodorus's most deadly vengeance. In addition to this, the Galla tribes were actively engaged in attacking the inhabitants, and destroying their property. The prognostications concerning a probable imprisonment in *Magdala* excited no apprehensions in the mind of the Missionary. Yet, among the mysterious, but ever-wise purposes of God, he was within this stronghold, to pass years of captivity and suffering.

"Our first hour's march over the rain-saturated plain was as cheerless as the reveries which occupied my mind; but no sooner did we reach the woody mountains, and inhale the cold invigorating morning breeze, than all sad forebodings vanished, and I began to feel quite sure that my journey, instead of terminating, as it had

been prognosticated, in a long imprisonment at Magdala, or in captivity or else in violent death among the Wollo Galla, would be of very short duration, and have, with God's blessing, a most successful issue. These lucubrations, as some who have never been placed in a similar position may term them, were entirely occupying my thoughts, when I heard a shrill voice announcing the approach of a great man; and in looking towards the lofty heights, along which our path was winding, I espied numerous groups of soldiers and servants, emerging out of the luxuriant trees and bushes; and in coming up to them, they gave us the welcome intelligence that the Aboona was in the rear, on his way to Debra Tabor, to marry the King to a daughter of Dejatch Oubie, the late Governor of Tigré.

"With trembling anxiety, I now gazed towards the smiling landscape, to obtain a glimpse of the great Churchman. The steady tramp of mules, and the glimmer of a scarlet-covered episcopal chair, announced the proximity of the procession. I instantly quitted my saddle, and with bared head and deferential obeisance, awaited the holy man's arrival. He was muffled and wrapped up in silk shawls, so that he could scarcely see any object farther than his saddle's high pommel; but even when informed of my presence, he merely lifted his silk drapery, and gave a glance quite sufficient to chill the blood in my veins. Not at all daunted or irritated by this contemptuous salutation, I again mounted my mule, and, without waiting for an invitation, joined the moving cavalcade. Squads of men and women, with a good sprinkling of priests and monks amongst them, at very short intervals, lined the road; but although they prostrated themselves in the dust and dirt before their Primate, it afforded me some satisfaction to see that they were not treated with more courtesy than myself. Nearly two hours' march had already been accomplished, and still there was no indication of a halt, and no change in the slow, grave, and dignified motion of the train. I asked several gloomy and sinister-looking priests, when and where their Chief would alight; but all that I could elicit from these obtuse, taciturn beings was, "*Alonkum*," ('don't know'). Determined to get rid of all torturing suspense, I rode up to the side of the Aboona's confessor, Kes Joseph, and requested him to procure me an interview. Without deigning a reply, he ambled away, and in a few minutes more the Aboona, the confessor, and myself, were seated under the shady foliage of blossoming euphorbias, and conversing in a familiar and unembarrassed strain. He at first surmised that I had made the mission to the Jews, a cover to tamper more insidiously with the belief of the Christians; but my reiterated solemn assurances that, our sole aim and desire was to bring the Falashas to the knowledge of the Saviour, removed all his suspicions, and elicited his full and unqualified permission to preach and hold assemblies in every Jewish settlement throughout his vast diocese."



The ministry and influence of Mr. Stern, aroused a large number of the members of the Abyssinian Church to a measure of anxiety and interest in divine things, which was new, and most encouraging. His apprehensions concerning the possible difficulties which the Aboona might obtrude, in opposition to his work, had given way before the evidences of a cordiality and sympathy which filled his heart with thanksgiving. The intelligence of the Metropolitan, conjoined with his conviction of the solemn importance of the truths which the Missionary proclaimed, had stimulated his desire that his ministry might be honoured and blessed. It was, moreover, evident, that he felt that this mission might not only be an instrument of enlightenment to the Falashas, but might awaken into life and devotion the dead and corrupt members of his own fallen Church. How far his own heart was brought under the power of the Truth we are left to surmise. But the following letter, which, during Mr. Stern's visit at Gaffat, he received from this powerful ecclesiastic, gave ground for hope, that to him the Gospel of Christ had been made the power of God unto salvation; and shows the estimation in which he held him, who had come from distant lands, to publish the message of peace :—

“To my respected brother, the Rev. Mr. Stern, minister of the Church of England, a pure apostle, full of zeal for the spread of the Gospel through all countries and climes. God preserve his valuable life from every sickness and calamity, direct him in all his movements, and suffer no obstacle to impede him in all his efforts.

“The light of truth which you, dear brother, have come to proclaim, will never be extinguished; nor will those who hear you continue uninstructed in the knowledge of salvation. You, my friend, resemble in zeal the zealous Paul, who awakened and aroused by his preaching many a sad and despairing heart, and who desired to be accursed from Christ for the sake of his countrymen; so it is with you, O preacher and minister of the Gospel. You come to Abyssinia, like an apostle, to devote health and energy to bring the Jews to Christ. The Lord accept your unwearied diligence in His cause, and make your efforts redound to His glory, and to the enlightenment and conversion of His people. May patience and perseverance be granted to you in your toilsome work, and may

every seed you scatter produce thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, to the glory of God our Father and Jesus our Redeemer. Amen.

(Signed) "SALAMA,

"Archbishop and Metropolitan of Abyssinia."

The character of the Church, of which this able man was the Head, demands some notice. The recognition of no other form of Christianity was permitted than that which was cultivated within her pale. Even the admission of the Falashas into the outward privileges of the Christian covenant, could only be legitimately accomplished through the agency of the Abyssinian priesthood.

"Let us turn to the Christians, or Amharas. Christianity, the national belief, was introduced into Abyssinia in the beginning of the fourth century by Frumentius and Edesius, the sons of a Syrian merchant, who, on a voyage to India, were driven by adverse winds to seek refuge on the rocky coast of the Red Sea. Seized by savage shepherds, their venerable father and the crew were at once murdered, and the future Apostles of Ethiopia would have shared the same fate, had not their pleasing appearance and submissive bearing won them the good graces of their captors. Animated by the noble ambition of subjugating the country of their exile and bondage to the sway of the Redeemer, the two captives, immediately on their arrival at Court, whither they had been conducted, set themselves to achieve this glorious enterprise. Their laudable efforts were crowned with the most wonderful success. The Emperor and his Court became the first converts to the new faith; and the religion espoused by those in authority soon found adherents among the common people. Athanasius, to whom Frumentius communicated these happy tidings, gratefully acknowledged the missionary's zeal by consecrating him Bishop of the new diocese; and the bond of union, cemented fifteen centuries ago between the Alexandrian and Abyssinian Churches, has continued firm and unbroken to the present day.

"The sword of Islam, which had extinguished the fires of the Magi in Persia, and uprooted the idolatries of Sabianism in Arabia, at length sought to sweep the cross from the mountain-regions of Ethiopia. Nursed in war, and expert in the use of the lance, the whole country united their forces to defend their religion and their home against the invading foe. Many a flourishing province between Nubia in the north, and Enerea in the south (where some of the heads of the idolatrous tribes still retain a Christian appellation, and observe certain Christian festivals), succumbed to the fierce onslaught of the fanatic Moslem, and the no less sanguinary inroads of the rising Pagan. Formidable assaults from without, and rebellion and treachery from within, brought that ancient monarchy almost to the brink of ruin and dissolution.

“In the sixteenth century the disciples of Loyola, in the hope of giving *éclat* to their new order, conceived the project of adding Abyssinia to the patrimony of St. Peter. Under the specious pretext of aiding the natives against their hereditary foes, the Arabs and Turks, they obtained permission to enter the country, and, by intrigues and cabal, succeeded in gaining many powerful partisans. But the work, supported by fraud and murder, was destined to end in the discomfiture of its abettors. Hatred, malice, and all other evil passions, were enlisted in the struggle; and although royalty for a time upheld the new creed, the vaunted triumphs of Rome were at last neutralized through the excessive violence and flagrant enormities of her own sanguinary agents. Since that period, they have repeatedly tried to regain a footing in their lost territory; and their last representative, Monsignor de Jacobis, an able and learned bishop, might have succeeded in his attempt, had not the Jesuitical propensity to blend religion with politics entirely defeated his object, and compelled him and his friends to seek safety in flight.

“The Abyssinian Church, although she has pertinaciously resisted the innovations of Rome, and the no less dangerous assaults of Islam, merits but little praise for her attachment to a creed which is a libel upon the Gospel, and a caricature on the true Christian faith. Weaned from idolatry, without being thoroughly enlightened by the truth, she soon substituted asceticism for purity of life, and a mechanical performance of certain rites for the true worship of the living God. Fasts and penances, the adoration of the Virgin, and the intercession of Saints, together with the practice of circumcision, the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, and of all the Mosaic restrictions as to clean and unclean animals, form the essential teachings of her creed. A beggar in the street would in vain ask charity in the name of the Saviour; but let him pronounce the magical word ‘Miriam,’ and a humble apology, or a small pittance, will be the reply. To adore an image is considered a heinous offence; but to fall down before the coarsest daub, or the wooden Tabot, is the highest act of Christian devotion. Fasts are observed most rigorously; and the wretch who is rioting in every shameful vice, will shrink with horror from the man who touches animal food during the interdicted seasons. Vice and immorality are even regulated by a peculiar ecclesiastical code; and a conscientious sinner will not hesitate to consult his spiritual adviser, as to the day and hour when he may with impunity break a Divine law.

“The cause of this spiritual degradation must in part be attributed to the selfishness of an idle priesthood, but more especially to their deplorable ignorance of the Word of God. A round of worthless ceremonials, and the daily repetition of the Liturgy in a language not understood by the people, and very often a dead letter even to the officiating priest, constitutes the service of the Church. At one time the King expressed his determination to supplant the ecclesiastical Ethiopic by the vernacular Amharic; but

as this would have subjected the priests to the trouble of reading what they now repeat by rote, such a storm of opposition was raised that, for the present, the subject is in abeyance.

“Indifferent as the Abyssinian divines are about the grand doctrine of the Redemption, they have ever been most violent in their defence of certain opinions on the mysterious subject of the Incarnation. According to their system of theology, our blessed Lord had three births. Christ proceeding from the Father they style the eternal birth; Christ born of the Virgin they designate the temporal birth; and Christ anointed by the Holy Ghost, or the union of the Divine and human nature in the Virgin, they term the third birth. The controversy between those who held the three-fold birth, and those who approximated in their views to the other Oriental Churches, has at times waxed so fierce, that the sword, instead of the Bible, has often been called on to decide the contest.

“Aboona Salama, on his appointment to the vacant See of Ethiopia, actively exerted himself to heal the divisions which these unprofitable speculations had created in the Church. His orthodox sentiments, for which he is indebted to the Church Missionary Society’s School at Cairo, where he was formerly a pupil, did not meet the approbation of his clergy, and for several years his life and property were exposed to imminent danger. About ten years ago, his archiepiscopal residence at Gondar was pillaged by the infatuated priesthood, and he himself only escaped mal-treatment by a timely flight into Tigré. On the accession of King Theodorus, a loud clamour was raised for a more orthodox Aboona; but to the general surprise, the royal herald made proclamation that his Majesty approved of the scriptural doctrines of the Aboona, and that in future all who adhered to the obnoxious dogma of the three-fold birth would be taught obedience by the *giraffe*. The Shoa clergy denounced this decision as arbitrary and tyrannical, as indeed it was; but an application of the promised whip wrought a wonderful change among that insubordinate body. Within the last few years several attempts have been made to revive the old controversy; and it is quite certain that, in spite of the giraffe, the deeply-rooted error will not be eradicated, till a new generation has displaced the present ignorant body of ecclesiastics.

“The Abyssinian Church, in common with all other Christian communities in Asia and Africa, is strictly Episcopal. The Aboona, or Primate, who is consecrated to his office by the Patriarch of Alexandria, the revered successor of St. Mark, can alone confer the priestly title. Every candidate, before presenting himself for ordination, must have acquired some knowledge in the reading of the sacred language of Ethiopia, and in the complicated ceremonies of the liturgical service. On the day appointed for ordination, the Primate, in full canonicals, and seated on the episcopal throne, receives the applicants for the sacred office. All being properly

ranged before the chair of St. Mark, each candidate solemnly abjures the old heresy of the three births, and then, instead of the imposition of hands, receives the Aboona's consecrating breath. Former Archbishops, less scrupulous than the present successor of Frumentius, indiscriminately breathed on all, whether qualified or not, who could pay the requisite fee of two salts—fourpence. This abuse of the Episcopal office is happily now no longer practised.

“Deacons are selected from among boys, who are only allowed to serve in the church till they attain the age of twelve or thirteen ; after that period their purity of life is suspected, and they are no longer considered fit to approach the sacred shrine of the Tabot. The Bishop and monks may not marry, while the priests may ; and as, on the death of their wives, they cannot contract a second alliance, the reverend wooers invariably choose for their partners the most robust and sprightly lasses in the land.

“The debterahts, or scribes, constitute the lowest, but most influential body in the Church. These worthies enjoy no ecclesiastical rank, are under no ecclesiastical discipline, and yet no service can be properly performed unless they take part in it. Their chief duty consists in chanting the Psalms and Liturgy, but their uncouth gesticulation and discordant shouting, instead of elevating devotion, tend rather, at least in European estimation, to convert the service of God into a sinful burlesque, and the sanctuary into a bedlam. The scanty learning of the country is exclusively monopolized by this order ; and they are so proud of their erudition, that they deem it a disgrace to exchange, by the breathing of the Aboona, the proud title of debteraht, for the less learned appellation of kas, or priest.

“These *literati*, notwithstanding their better acquaintance with the sacred volume and the lives of the saints, are considered the most arrant scoundrels in the land. Gondar, which contains a considerable number of the fraternity, is notorious for the dissolute profligacy of its inhabitants ; and it is proverbial throughout the country that wherever debterahts abound, there vice and immorality thrive.

“Ignorant and depraved as the Abyssinians are, they yet possess many traits of character which, if rightly developed, may hereafter raise them to be a great civilized Christian nation. Superior in mental culture, religious sentiments, and social condition to the tribes and races around them, they only require to become thoroughly imbued with the knowledge of the Gospel, and their ardent temper, purified from its gross passions, will prompt them to carry the message of salvation to those densely-populated regions of Central Africa which have never felt the breath of Divine truth, and have never heard the glad tidings of redeeming love.

“The Abyssinian Church holds the doctrine of purgatory, and post mortem purification. Its origin may be traced to the Jews, though self-interest and avarice assign to it a higher source. The



number of masses requisite for the repose of the soul has not been defined by the Church, and thus the misery or bliss of the defunct is at the mercy of niggardly relatives and exacting priests. At the expiration of a fortnight or month, the Tascar, or banquet for the dead, is celebrated, when priests and debterahts will, in pious devotion, devour a widow's last cow, or riot on her hard savings of many years' toil. The commemorative feast is repeated once every twelve months; and this gluttonous exhibition the devout and superstitious family believe enhances the bliss of the deceased, and wafts the soul to brighter realms. Within the last few years, through the circulation of the Scriptures in the vernacular, more enlightened views have been diffused amongst the people, and many now openly ridicule the idea, that the indecent debauch of depraved ecclesiastics, can advance the happiness of departed spirits.

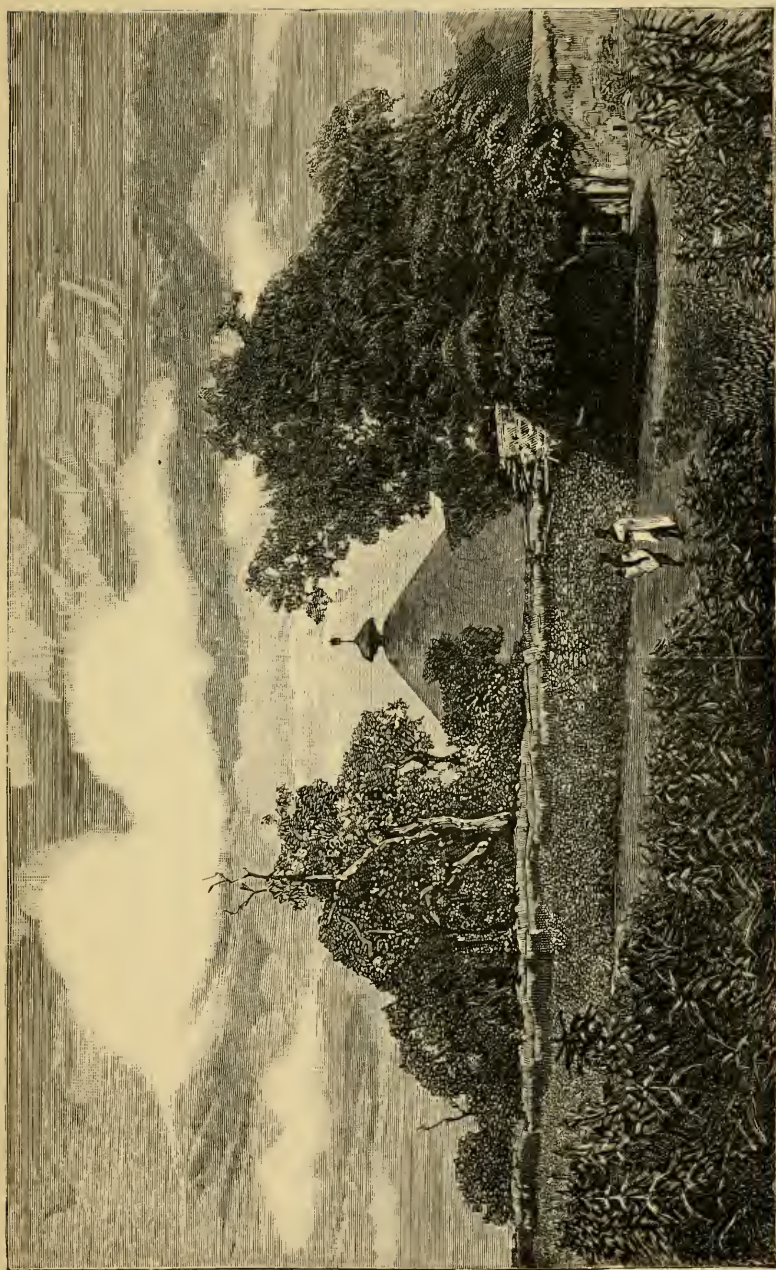
"An instance of this altered feeling occurred in a village on the plains of Dembea. A shum of considerable rank, while on a visit to the kolla, or low country, caught a dangerous fever, which, on his return home, proved fatal. The distracted relatives, in the excess of their grief, found some consolation in the tears of friends and the cordial sympathy of a sorrowing district. Liberality to the priests, and kindness to the poor had won the defunct official golden opinions; and bands of ecclesiastics and mendicants, in hypocritical rivalry, emulated each other in extolling the many virtues which had adorned his character. The sorrow-stricken widow and bereaved children, in the exuberance of their gratitude for the consolation so generously proffered, bestowed handsome largesses on several churches and the mass-saying priests. A grand Tascar was also ere long appointed, and, in eager expectation of a profuse supply of detch, dallah, and broundo, groups of hungry guests, from far and near, were wending their way on the auspicious day towards the house of mourning. The son of the late district authority, a shrewd waggish fellow, who had more concern for the patrimony than for his ancestor's soul, deferentially welcomed the grinning, bowing, and flattering multitude. A whole string of complimentary and unmeaning phrases having been duly exchanged between the host and his guests, the conversation spontaneously turned on the many noble qualities of the late 'baal beit,' which every one eulogized in most extravagant terms. 'And do you, my fathers, really believe,' inquired the dutiful son, 'that my good and honoured parent is in the blest abode of the righteous?' 'No doubt,' shouted each brounda craving throat, 'he is in Abraham's bosom.' 'If this is true,' returned the scrupulous inquirer, 'and who can question the words of the holy fathers? he is in a safe and happy place, and I must not disturb him by a Tascar.' The confounded reverends sought to modify and retract their verdict, but the pious host was inexorable in his filial resolve, and high and low, priests and beggars, were compelled to march off with hunger unappeased."

We may here add a passage, descriptive of the domain over which the Aboona presided, and from which he derived a very considerable income. In dealing with his own ecclesiastics, he proved himself to be a discriminating judge, and a severe administrator of ecclesiastical punishments.

"A further ride of two hours brought us to *Genda*, the ecclesiastical domain of the Aboona. His Grace had already communicated the probability of our visit to his shum, and this official generously offered us a home and shelter during our stay. We accepted the proffered accommodation for our servants and animals, but as our skins had not yet become impervious to the sting and bite of all kinds of reptiles and insects, we preferred to brave the uncertain dangers of the open plain, to the sure assault from the varied specimens of entomology to be found in a native shed.

"The town of *Genda*, with its district, which affords a considerable revenue to the Aboona in office, also receives within its bounds his remains when defunct. The church dedicated to this sacred object stands on a wide open space, embowered by the sombre foliage of venerable trees. Like all sacred edifices, it is conically shaped, and surmounted by an apex on which glitters, in the bright rays of the sun, the significant brazen emblem of the Christian faith. The successive Metropolitans who lie buried here, I believe, never expended a salt on its repair, and the walls would long since have crumbled into ruin, had not the contributions of the faithful priest, and the handicraft of the unbelieving *Falasha*, occasionally patched up the revered mausoleum. Half-a-dozen fanatical monks, who had come from a remote province to worship at the shrine of the holy fathers, when they saw me levelling my photographic camera, which they mistook for a hostile gun; fiercely seized their massive clubs, and, in a compact line, marched on the imaginary enemy. I disarmed their monkish wrath by reversing the instrument. They had still some suspicion about my design, but, on showing them the portrait of the Aboona, and the process of taking a view, their fears were forgotten in bewildering amazement, and they emphatically ejaculated, '*Be Aboona Salama ye mooi.*' (By the death of Aboona Salama), you are a magician!"

"His Grace's palace, a conically-shaped Egyptian tent, was, from motives of policy, situated on an undulating verdant sward, near enough to be seen, but not near enough to allow the occupants of the imperial domiciles to scrutinize their Metropolitan's doings. The genuine simplicity of this apostolic abode made me almost sigh a *peccavi* at the recollection of my former uncharitable suspicions about prelatical pride and hauteur; but a closer glance at the gaudy-coloured sanctum, and the scores of prostrate priests at its entrance, dissipated all such squeamish qualms, and, to the satisfaction of my grinning servant, who, no doubt, thought that I was treading on holy ground with a prayer on my lips, I uncon-



THE CHURCH AT GENDA. THE ABOONAS' BURIAL-PLACE.





sciously said aloud, 'Ah! enthrone a bishop in Africa, or enthrone him in Europe, if Christ is not his example, and the Spirit his teacher, he will practically vilify that very truth which he professes to uphold.'

"There were at least five or six hundred Churchmen squatted on the large open space in front of the tent, waiting for an interview with their ecclesiastical Chief. Their appearance, though grave and solemn, lacked dignity and intellect, that true impress of the Gospel mission. The rigid features and inanimate eyes, partly muffled in cumbrous shamas, and partly shaded by voluminous white turbans, were, by some inexplicable law of attraction, uniformly bent upon that humble canvas screen which sparkled and shone under the sportive rays of the noonday sun.

"About a dozen pairs of gay and smiling priests shackled in rusty fetters, as if proud of their distinction, in singular contrast to their sombre and immobile co-workmen, strutted on the velvet turf, with steps apparently regulated by the music of their not very creditable chains. Now, manacled gangs were by no means unfamiliar to me, having resided near the arsenal of the Grand Turk, and was at that very time moving in the courtly atmosphere of Negoos Theodorus; but then almost every one of those belear-eyed incorrigible vagabonds had the tale of his life written in letters of fire on his villainous countenance; whilst these ironed priests wore neither the meek look of guilty penitents, nor exhibited the most honourable badges to clerical preferment. Absorbed in the puzzling conjecture as to the nature of the chains, which these reverend gentlemen so ostentatiously paraded, I abstractedly walked on, and was already in the presence of the great Aboona, when, to my confusion, I became aware of the ugly fact that I had not been announced. I quickly apologized in the best language I could command; but his Grace in most urbane terms assured me that the etiquette, indispensable in receiving strangers, was never enforced at the visits of friends. This condescending reception broke the ice of formality, and in a lively and interesting strain we were discussing topics of heterodoxy and themes of orthodoxy; on the priests of Shoa, who eschew truth, and with their ever faithful dagger maintain error; on the Godjamees, who profess Christianity, and yet sadly stick to Pagan vagaries and Falasha superstitions; in fact, our conversation might have smoothly run on till dewy eve, had not the declining shadow—the indicator of time's flight in primitive Ethiopia—struck life into those crouching statues, and unstrung the tongues of those taciturn heads. '*Aboona ye moot!*' 'May the Aboona die.' A solemn and flattering oath, in varied cadences, from the deep bass to the shrill soprano, resounded from the throats of a band of prostrate and cringing ecclesiastics, and was reproduced in all its mellifluous native accent by the ever-faithful echo. Such an adjuration even an Aboona could not resist, and, comfortably seated on his cushioned alga, with a black



silk covering over his august head down to his genuine Coptic nose, he had to endure the dreadful bore of listening to all sorts of complaints, from the consecration of a tabot to the exorcising of a bouda; and from a breach of ecclesiastical discipline, to the ignominious seizure of a poor parishioner's useful donkey.

"The heterogeneous mass of subjects submitted to the prelate's decision, might have perplexed the most acute judgment and shrewd intellect, but twenty-two years' constant practice had sharpened his Grace's judicial perceptions; and, in a masterly manner, the abstruse subtleties of polemics were unravelled, and the refractory conduct of the contumacious promptly chastised. One party being dismissed, another was about to advance, when they were peremptorily ordered to stand back till the charges against the *Abadies*, or fathers in chains, had been satisfactorily settled.

"A glow of indignation overspread the calm and placid features of the Prelate as those worthies were introduced, and, quite unlike the other evildoers, they were addressed in a tone that caused their swarthy cheeks to grow pale, and their whole frame feverishly to throb. The withering sarcasm of their chief pastor's impassioned salutation, inclined me to believe that these cowering and crouching figures, an hour before so haughty, and now so crestfallen, must be horrid criminals and irreclaimable offenders: but it was not so. Their reverences, as I soon understood, had neither robbed churches nor scandalized their caste by unlawful practices, as others in that white-clad company had done; but they were guilty of that which, in the Prelatical balances, far outweighed every other sacerdotal failing,—they had pertinaciously clung to the abolished dogma of the three births of Christ, and they had also arrogantly absolved certain priests whom his Grace had found it necessary to excommunicate. The poor men, writhing under the fear of the impending verdict, pathetically appealed to the Aboona's clemency; and, no doubt, their penitential contrition mitigated the severity of the sentence, which, though lenient, consisted of several months' successive fasts, divers fines, and the promise of the giraffe; besides the pleasing prospect that a repetition of the offence might involve banishment from the realm, and the amputation of a leg or the loss of an arm.

"Now, in Abyssinia, where the spiritual authority of the Church is controlled by the secular power of the Crown, the Metropolitan cannot legally inflict corporal punishment; but as every priest knows that in matters of faith, and particularly on questions relating to the disputed tenet of our Lord's birth, the King zealously supports the Aboona, nevertheless, very few, unless their lives are in danger, would submit their religious differences to the secular rather than to the spiritual tribunal."

The despotic power of Theodorus was frequently exercised without regard to the office and dignity of those persons who lived in the country, or who acted as ambassadors from neighbouring

States. Even ecclesiastics felt again and again the burden of his displeasure, and the rigour of his rule. To curb the pretensions of others, as much with a view of asserting his own superiority, as in the ebullitions of passion to which he was subject, seemed to him a pastime, even more than a duty. The claims of justice and sound policy, were often curiously united with the determination to make everyone and everything bend to his relentless will. When he reached supreme power we read :—

“The hierarchy who, by many overt acts, had manifested their antipathy to the new King and their sympathy with every rising rebel, were deservedly selected to expiate their unchristian bias towards anarchy and disorder, by the establishment of a new code for the regulation of Church property, and the administration of her revenues.

“Since the reign of Yasous, A.D. 1680, the Abyssinian Church, partly by intrigue and partly by intimidation, had acquired vast landed property. These extensive domains, which comprise a third of the country, are free from all imposts and taxation. The King, unwilling to increase the burden of the peasant at the expense of the Church, at once sequestered all this property for the use of the State; and instead of swarms of ignorant and vicious priests, who obtained ordination in order to live without labour, and assumed the turban in order to enjoy luxurious ease, he appointed two priests and three deacons for each church, and to these he gave small tracts of land to cultivate for their maintenance. The storm of indignation and ebullition of wrathful feeling, which this new edict provoked, taught him the impracticability of carrying into immediate execution, a policy so important for the interests and welfare of his country; but although he bided his time, he did not abandon his plan, and in 1860, a little after my arrival in the country, the suspended law came into full force.

“In December, 1856, whilst the King was encamped at Jan Meeda, near Debra Tabor, he obtained intelligence of the arrival of the Copt Patriarch, Cyrillus, who had been despatched as Ambassador Extraordinary by Said Pasha, the Viceroy of Egypt. At the first interview the King expressed surprise that a *Lik Papas*, or Patriarch, should assume the office of a Mohammedan representative, and, as if anxious to make the proud priest smart for the supercilious contempt which he had evinced for the Abyssinians since his arrival in the country, he inquired, in a tone of sarcastic irony, whether the propositions he offered for his acceptance were dictated by love to Christ, or devotion to Said Pasha. The Patriarch, galled by these taunts, merged the mildness of the priest in the ire of the offended Ambassador, and, in words to which royalty, even

in the wilds of Africa is unaccustomed, gave utterance to his hitherto suppressed passion, an indiscretion which caused him and the Aboona to be placed under arrest in the royal camp. This of course created a strong sensation; and from every quarter priests and monks repaired to the royal presence to intercede in behalf of their ecclesiastical Chiefs. To curb the importunity of these clamorous petitioners, he callously replied that he left the solution of his quarrel with a higher Power, and that if he was wrong in not complying with the conditions of the Patriarch, which required that he should expel his few valued European friends, and grant various privileges to his Mahommedan subjects, the men whom they hypocritically styled saints would, no doubt, like Tecla Haimanot, be favoured with wings to fly out of the thorny enclosure within which they were confined. Unfortunately, this volant power was not imparted to the incarcerated and well-guarded prelates; a disappointment which bent their stout minds, and taught the Gospel maxim of humility to their proud hearts. The King, satisfied that the salutary penance of five days' imprisonment had not been inflicted in vain, came to terms with his prisoners, and, in the sight of the applauding army, the Patriarch and Aboona were led out of their demolished prickly fence, to more commodious and agreeable quarters.

“In the following November the Patriarch obtained leave to depart, and never did a chief pastor more willingly quit his flock, or a flock more anxiously sigh for the disappearance of their chief pastor, than the Abyssinians did for the hated Cyrillus, and Cyrillus for that of the equally hated Abyssinians.”

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE FALASHAS.

It is now necessary, that the people to whom Mr. Stern's mission was specially addressed should be made the subject of our consideration. So uncertain and complex had been the accounts which from time to time had reached Europe concerning the origin, habits, and religious belief of this remarkable people, that it needed personal inquiry and observation in order to arrive at just and satisfactory conclusions concerning them. That they professed to be Jews, and were in the habit of observing many Jewish ceremonies, had been well known. But the evidence on which their claims rested, and the extent to which their practices coincided with those enjoined in the Levitical Law, was the subject still of considerable uncertainty. It was part of Mr. Stern's duty to endeavour to arrange and reduce to order this tangled skein of mingled truth and fable, and to elucidate the facts which would justify his mission being accepted, as one essentially to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

"Falasha, from the Ethiopic *falas*, signifies exile, and is the name by which the Jews in Abyssinia are designated. The period of their settlement in that remote country is involved in uncertainty. According to their own tradition, and the concurrent testimony of native Christian writers, they came to Ethiopia in the reign of Maqueda, the Queen of Sheba. This princess, who, in the lays and legends of the country, is portrayed in the most glowing and extravagant colours, had frequently heard from merchants and traders, of the magnificence and wisdom of the Jewish Monarch. Curiosity, not unmixed with a touch of pardonable vanity, prompted her to visit the court of the wise and famous Solomon. Her faultless beauty, and intellectual sagacity, won for her the favour and

assiduous attentions of the gifted King; and, after a lengthened sojourn at Jerusalem, she returned to her own dominions, laden with munificent presents, and, what greatly enhanced her happiness, with a youthful heir and prince, in the person of her son Menilek. The bond of friendship and union between the two mighty rulers, initiated by mutual regard and cemented by the tenderest affection, was made still more lasting and secure by religious sympathy. In the train of the illustrious princess, besides a number of distinguished Jews from every tribe, was Azariah, the son of the High-priest Zadok, to whom the pious parent had specially intrusted the education of Menilek and the guardianship of the *tabot*, or transcript of the law. The impetuous zeal of the emigrants found ample scope for its loftiest inspiration in the new world to which they were transplanted, and in the course of a few years the worship of the God of Israel extensively supplanted the idolatries of Ethiopia.

“From these vague traditions in which truth and fiction are inextricably jumbled together, the inquirer does not gain much trustworthy information on the history of Ethiopia, and the settlement of the Jews in that country. The most probable conjecture is, that at a very early period—perhaps when Solomon’s fleet navigated the Red Sea—some adventurous Jews, impelled by love of gain, settled among the pleasant hills of Arabia Felix; whilst others of a more daring and enterprising spirit were induced to try their fortune in the more remote, though not less salubrious, mountain scenes of Ethiopia. The Queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon, whether she reigned over both or only one of those countries, is an incontestable proof that the wise King’s fame had spread far beyond his own empire. To subjects of a monarch so renowned for wisdom, wealth and power, a gracious reception was, no doubt, everywhere accorded; and the new settlers, in their prosperity abroad, probably soon forgot the attractions of their home in Judea. Subsequent troubles in Palestine, and the final overthrow of the Jewish monarchy by Nebuchadnezzar, increased the number of the emigrants, and in the lapse of a few centuries the Jews formed a powerful State in Arabia, and a formidable and turbulent people in the Alpine regions between Tigré and Amhara in Ethiopia.

“The legend of Menilek and the supposed descent of the Abyssinian Sovereigns from the line of Solomon, unquestionably exercised a salutary influence in favour of the Jews, and contributed more than anything else towards the spread of those Mosaic rites and ceremonies, which to this day are still so extensively engrafted on the Christianity of the country. On the promulgation of the Gospel, the Jews, who had now become scattered all over the western plains of Tschelga and Dembea, retired again to their mountain fastnesses of Semien and Bellessa, where, under their own king and queen, called Gideon and Judith, they maintained till the beginning of the 17th century a chequered and independent



existence. With the fall of their last ruler, and the capture of their strongholds, the Falashas were driven from their rocky homes, and forced to seek a refuge in the midst of their enemies, the detested Amharas. The provinces in which they at present reside are Dembea, Quara, Woggera, Tschelga, and Godjam, where their settlements are strikingly distinguished from the Christian villages by the red earthen pot on the apex of their *mesquid*, or place of worship, which towers from the centre of the thatched huts by which it is invariably environed.

“Claiming a lineal descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Falashas pride themselves on the fame of their progenitors, and the purity of the blood that circulates in their own veins. Internarrriages with those of another tribe or creed are strictly interdicted, nay, even a visit to an unbeliever’s house is a sin, and subjects the transgressor to the penance of a thorough lustration and a complete change of dress, before he can return to his own home. Their stern, uncompromising sectarian spirit, has been highly beneficial in excluding from their community that licentious profligacy in which all the other inhabitants of Ethiopia riot; and it is generally admitted that Falasha men and women seldom, if ever, stray from the path of virtue, or transgress the solemn law of the decalogue.

“The bane of early marriages—the blight of domestic happiness and holy affection in so many countries,—the Jew in Abyssinia justly deprecates, and no parent will give his daughter to a man who is not conscious of the responsibility he contracts, and willing to labour for the woman he has wooed. Most of the men enter into the marital state at an age varying from twenty to thirty, and the women from fifteen to twenty; and the troth once plighted, no priestly power can ever annul. Polygamy they do not practise, nor are their daughters and wives shut up in closely-fenced huts, as amongst the Christian magnates; on the contrary, they enjoy immunity from all slavish restraint, and their graceful and modest deportment is the best proof that they are worthy of it.

“Faithful in their domestic relations, the Falashas are also, as far as their limited knowledge of the Scriptures extends, faithful to their religious convictions. The law of Moses, which they profess to observe, is the formula after which they have moulded their worship; and it sounds strange to hear in Central Africa of a Jewish altar and atoning sacrifices. Their *mesquids*, like the Christian Churches, consist of three divisions, with an entrance towards the east. The admission into these different courts is rigorously regulated by the Levitical Law, and the severest penalty would be inflicted on anyone who should incautiously pollute the sacred edifice. In the rear of every place of worship is a small enclosure, with a huge stone in the centre; and on this crude altar the victim is slaughtered, and all other sacrificial rights performed. This sanctum is as sacredly guarded from unlawful intrusion as the rest

of the premises, and woe betide the stranger who, ignorant of Falasha customs, ventures too close to the forbidden precincts. Before I had been initiated into the mysteries of mesquid architecture, I was one day on the very verge of committing this unpardonable offence. It was a very sultry and close noon when, after several hours' fatiguing march, we reached a Falasha village. Eager to obtain a short rest, I went in quest of a cool and quiet shelter, when accidentally I espied, in the midst of a secluded grassy spot, a smooth block, that looked as if it had been charitably placed there to invite the weary to solitude and repose. The thorny stockade easily yielded to the iron of my lance, and I was just about to ensconce myself behind the flattened stone, when a chorus of angry voices, made still more clamorous by the ever-tantalizing echo, reminded me of my mistake, and urged me to beat a hasty retreat.

"The painful scarcity of the sacred volume among the Falashas, which forcibly reminds one of the pathetic denunciation in Amos, ch. viii., 11, 12, is exhibited in their unconscious deviation from that very law which they so loudly profess to observe. Their sacrifices are most capriciously offered, and, with the exception of the Paschal Lamb, neither the offering on the Sabbath, nor on the day of Atonement, is in accordance with the original command. Ignorant as the priests and their people are of the contents of God's Word, they possess a most familiar knowledge of those chapters in Leviticus that treat of the laws of purification. Saturday after Saturday, the Falasha congregations throughout Abyssinia hear in their *mesquids* an exposition or discourse on that edifying topic; even a stranger, whom the officiating ministers deign to honour, is condemned to listen, amidst the melodious *la la la's* of the women, to a chapter describing leprosy, plague, or other ills which sin and dirt, vice and ungodliness, have entailed on offending humanity. To provide for any such contingency, every Falasha settlement has a hut at its outskirts, and there the unclean and impure must take refuge during the prescribed number of days.

"This ritual scrupulosity involves many social hardships, and inflicts on numbers many a keen pang. Particularly in the hour of dissolution, when the sweet expressions of friendship and love are so soothing to the agonized soul and anguished frame, the dying Falasha has no affectionate hand clasped in his, and no words of comfort from beloved objects whispered in his ears. The inflexible law forbids the last offices to the weeping relative, and the helpless sufferer is, in death's agonizing convulsions, dragged from the weary couch into the open air, where the polluted and unclean remove him from the bare ground to the tainted and lonely hut.

"The feasts ordained in Scripture are regularly observed by the Falashas, though with less rigour than by the Jews in other parts of the world. Passover, which, also according to Exodus xii. 2, marks

the commencement of their new year, is solemnized by offering the appointed sacrifice, and by the substitution of unleavened for leavened bread. These passover cakes they do not prepare beforehand in the orthodox style, but each family bakes every day the quantity requisite for the household. On the feast of Pentecost, the feast of trumpets, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles, the people bring their offerings to the *mesquids*, and also join in appropriate commemorative prayers; but beyond this, and abstinence from agricultural pursuits, they neither blow the horn, erect booths, nor practise the other ancient ceremonies of the synagogue.

“But, notwithstanding this apparent laxity in the observance of their other festivals, they entertain the most rigid notions as to the sanctity of the Sabbath. The preparations for the due celebration of this sacred day commence on Friday at noon, when every one, who is not prevented by illness, repairs to an adjacent river, to bathe and change his garb. This task accomplished, the majority lazily saunter about in the fields, or indolently recline on the grassy margin of some sparkling stream, till sunset summons to the *mesquid*. The service, which consists in chanting psalms and hymns, relieved by allegorical stories, and a few verses or a chapter of the book of Leviticus, lasts a considerable time, and in some places, the plaintive notes of the worshippers may even be heard across the quiet valley and around the lonely hill, throughout the night. This extreme religious fervour the priests exclusively monopolize, nor do their flocks envy them a privilege which would rob them, after six days’ toil, of that very rest and physical health which the Sabbath was designed to promote.

“Exemplary in their morals, cleanly in their habits, and devout in their belief, the Falashas are also industrious in the daily pursuits and avocations of life. Husbandry and a few simple trades—such as smiths, potters, and weavers,—constitute the sole occupations in which they engage; commerce they unanimously repudiate as incompatible with their Mosaic Creed, and it is quite a disappointment not to find a single merchant, among a quarter of a million of people, the lineal descendants of those who are supposed to have acquired a taste for traffic and riches, on the very eve of their emancipation from Egyptian servitude.

“The conscientious fidelity of the Falasha to the law is strangely inverted by the very priests who pretend to be its props and support. According to the unimpeachable annals of the Church, Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia at the end of the third or the commencement of the fourth century. The Jewish religion, free from all traditional corruptions antecedent to this date, as I have already mentioned, had numerous adherents both in Habesh and across the Straits, in Arabia the Happy. Islamism, which, like an irresistible equatorial conflagration, spread its devastating and

devouring flames from the Indus to the Ganges, and from the Wall of China to the Pillars of Hercules, annihilated the Jewish polity in the land of its birth, and offered the alternative of death or the Koran. The existence of a Jewish colony in an adjacent continent, no doubt induced many to seek liberty in exile, and toleration in penury. Fanaticism, like an epidemic, intensified by persecution, was fed in solitude, and ripened on Semien's stern and craggy heights. The poor emigrants, having preferred poverty and want, to liberty and a hated creed, now sought to infuse their own spirit of bigotry into their co-religionists; and as the Christians had not profited much by the Gospel, so the Jews had evidently not been much benefited by the solemn spiritual truths taught by Moses. Sacrifices and misunderstood ceremonies constituted then, as at present, their whole religious system. The people, who always recognized in their spiritual guides the arbitrators of their future weal or woe, willingly paid them, as they still do, the homage of their hearts, and the tithe of all their earthly possessions. Human ambition, however, is quite as soaring in Central Africa as in civilized Europe, and the grasping priest, not content with his sacerdotal character, must needs be also distinguished from the common herd by the sanctity of his person, and the immaculate purity of his life. The laxity of morals amongst the Christians, which had also infected the Jews, afforded the longed-for opportunity; and a fanatic called Gorgorius, who proclaimed himself a prophet, loudly denounced the prevailing evil, and enjoined on all who would follow him, to take the same steps as those who in the earlier days of Christianity put a mistaken construction on one of our Lord's sayings in Matt. xix.

"Impelled by a blind and implicit faith in the regenerator of their caste, these priests, after their initiation, frequently pass months and years, like the Christian hermit in times of yore, in swampy marshes, stern wilds, and poisonous jungles, where roots or dried peas (which latter they carry with them) are their only means of subsistence. Numbers succumb to the noxious influence of the atmosphere, others perish of famine, whilst not a few become the prey of the lion, tiger, hyena, and other voracious and venomous beasts, which inhabit those unsightly tracts. These hardships and dangers, one would think, were quite enough to deter any one from so hazardous and difficult a novitiate; but such is the contagion of fanaticism, that not only will many patiently, for years and years, endure pains and privation, hunger and toil; but scores, in the wild frenzy of their disordered imagination, will, every year during the rainy season, seek peace for their troubled souls by a voluntary grave, in the deep and rapid streams which intersect the whole land. Debterah Negousee, an honest and candid Falasha, told me, he knew a priest who threw himself into a boisterous river, flowing through Armatgioho, but as the current was very strong, and the banks in some parts on a level with the water, he was drifted ashore





SCENE ON THE RIVER ERIP, ABYSSINIA.





in a state of stupor. The self-immolating ascetic, when consciousness returned, felt deeply afflicted at this escape from premature death; and as if some great misfortune had befallen him, he lamented, in his restoration to earth, an imaginary unfitness for heaven. Those who inflict on themselves all the tortures and wasting agonies frail humanity can endure, are regarded by the common people with great veneration; though others, and particularly the debterahs, or learned class, consider them proud, arrogant, and self-righteous fanatics. The dwellings and convents of these ascetics are carefully isolated from the abodes of the impure and unholy people; nay, as every contact with the common herd communicates contamination, and involves laborious lavations of body and dress, they will not eat, drink, or sleep in the houses of other people; even their own fields must be cultivated, the harvest reaped, and the bread prepared, by themselves or younger monks.

“There is something in the very appearance of these ascetics, which proclaims them martyrs to their own bigotry and self-created delusion. The common people have all an erect, upright carriage, altogether free from that nervous and shrinking diffidence which external tyranny or internal despair engender; but the priests, whenever their own piety and self-righteous deeds are not questioned, have, as a body, the unhappy look, the knitted brow, the restless glance, which speak of corroding cares and hopeless anguish. In physiognomy, most of the Falashas bear striking traces of their Semitic origin. Among the first group we saw at Gondar, there were some whose Jewish features no one could have mistaken, who had ever seen the descendants of Abraham, either in London or Berlin. Their complexion is a shade paler than that of the Abyssinians, and their eyes, although black and sparkling, are not so disproportionately large as those which characteristically mark the other occupants of the land.

“These people, so isolated from the rest of the world, and so unsocial in all their habits, presented most formidable obstacles to the success of missionary efforts. To despise and abhor every alien creed as worthless and false, has always been the secret boast of the priest, and an essential lesson enforced at the *mesquid*. The idolatries and gross superstitions of the various races and tribes in and around Ethiopia, rendered such intolerance not only justifiable, but absolutely necessary; and one can scarcely wonder that the Hebrew, in the midst of these moral wastes and sin-stained regions, should consider himself the sole possessor of the true faith—the sole adorer of the true and invisible God. News of our arrival in the country, and of the object we sought to achieve, no sooner spread through their scattered settlement, than, in an ebullition of mistaken zeal, they solemnly resolved not to have any intercourse with men who, as it had been misrepresented to them, were anxious to wean them from the spiritual worship of the great Adonai of Israel,

to the senseless idols of the Abyssinian Church. The delay in obtaining the requisite official sanction to our work, which we found extremely harassing at the time, was, however, under an overruling Providence, made subservient to allay their bigotry and to remove their groundless fears. That our belief differed materially from that of the detested Amharas, they had already heard from soldiers in the royal camp, and monks on the roadside; and when they received exaggerated intelligence of the Aboona's opposition to our efforts, their curiosity was roused to the highest pitch, and priests and common people manifested a most anxious solicitude to hear the extraordinary strangers, whom pure compassion for their souls' welfare, had prompted to encounter the dangers of a long and wearisome journey."

All attempts to propagate divine truth are invariably met, at first, either by doubts or opposition. The motives of its adherents, and the principles on which their operations are carried on, are naturally the object of suspicion and prejudice, until examination and experience demonstrate their purity and worth.

That our Missionary had a smaller measure of these difficulties placed in his way, than those which may generally be traced in Missions to the Jews, may be accounted for by the manly sincerity and unhesitating confidence with which he delivered his Master's message. We have seen the power which these exercised over the minds and conduct of the Jews of Persia and Arabia Felix, and are therefore prepared to trace corresponding effects in his ministry to the Falashas of Abyssinia. But this was not attained without some of those impediments, which the designing and ignorant are at all times ready to place in the way. On his arrival at the village of *Woggera*, he found that the Falashas had been alarmed, through false rumours concerning the nature and object of his mission; which, however, were dispelled by a short and timely explanation. "Several Jewish peasants, who were weeding the green teff fields, when they saw us, left their agricultural implements, and quickly hurried away to communicate the tidings. The intelligence evidently produced great consternation. We immediately conjectured that the vicious Amharas had also here plied their mischievous tongues, to sow distrust and alarm. To ascertain the truth, we dispatched Debterah Negousee into the enclosure, which, everywhere in Habesh, secures the homes of Israel from the polluting

foot of the unbeliever. He soon returned with a knot of Falashas, who candidly told us that every man, woman, and child would have gladly assembled to hear us, had they not been frightened by a report, that we were authorized to bind round their necks the *matteb*—the hated badge of Abyssinian Christianity. We removed their fears and prejudices before we separated, and they all promised to visit us frequently whilst at Genda.”

The reception which in general he experienced was most cheering and satisfactory. There was hardly a Falasha village in which the people did not show a readiness to relinquish the work in which they were engaged, in order to hear from the lips of the Missionary the glad tidings of great joy. The contrast between the vain and idolatrous superstitions with which they had become familiarized, under the name of Christianity, and the simplicity and sweetness of the record which God had given in His Word concerning His Son, arrested their attention and secured their sympathy.

“The impassable gulf between us and the Falashas being now bridged over, we at once commenced our missionary work by visiting *Anora*, half-an-hour’s distance south-west of Gondar. This village, which lies on the other side of the river Kaha, on a rich and fertile plain, consists of about thirty houses and a *mesquid*. Forbidden by ceremonial rigour from entering a Falasha dwelling, we took shelter from the vertical rays of a scorching sun, behind a dilapidated wall, overshadowed by the mimosa and the graceful euphorbia. The report of our arrival instantly attracted every one, who was at home, to the spot where we had alighted. After the usual salutations, we inquired whether they had any religious books, to which they replied, ‘We have Moses and David.’ On this we rejoined, ‘Do you also believe in the Prophets, and in Christ, of whom all the inspired writers unitedly testify?’ They hesitated a little, and then said, in a timid tone of voice, as if conscious that they were uttering an untruth, ‘We keep the law.’ We reminded them that they could not keep the law, and that the law was not able, even if they possessed the ability to perform all its rites, and to conform to all its ordinances, to procure for them pardon of sins, or acceptance with God. We further told them that a sacrifice, far more precious than those that bled on the altar in the temple, was indispensable, and that Christians possessed this sacrifice in Christ, who, by His vicarious suffering, atoned for our guilt, and provided for our justification. They cordially assented to every word we said, and only regretted that they were too ignorant to retain all those precious truths. To our inquiry whether they had

any desire to learn, they exclaimed with an imploring expression in their black lustrous eyes, 'O yes! O yes!' We then informed them that we were also Falashas, who, moved by compassion for their helpless and deplorable condition, had crossed seas and deserts, dreary swamps and unsightly wilds, to communicate to them these tidings of mercy, which alone can secure peace to the troubled conscience, and fill the soul with love to a sin-hating God. They were exceedingly grateful for our interest in their spiritual welfare and everlasting happiness. At our departure they all accompanied us, and we had several times to entreat them to return, before they could be persuaded to tear themselves away from their unexpected friends.

"The cool lawns of *Quosquam* might have tempted us to protract our stay during the sultry heat of the day, but, as we had still to pay our friends at *Antonius* a visit, we again vaulted into our saddles, and in another half-hour were midway up a steep wooded mountain ridge, on which hangs, securely nestled, the quiet Falasha village. Seating ourselves on a fragment of dislodged rock, beneath an artificial terrace, on which the never-absent tainted hut for the impure was erected, we awaited the assembling of the people. It being Friday, when every one must be at home to prepare for the Sabbath, groups of men and women, wrapped in their holiday attire, soon collected on the uneven and stony space before us. As in other places, so also in this settlement, we plainly stated our design, and the motives which actuated us in our efforts. They unanimously declared, 'We believe it! We believe it!' Touched by the confidence they placed in our simple declaration, we affectionately and faithfully exposed their fatal error, in believing that a few legal observances and external rites were the worship due to God, or the sole object of the Law. The monument of Fasilidas' horse, discernible through the majestic trees and thickets, afforded an apt illustration, and, directing their dark and sparkling eyes towards it, we said, 'This memorial of a dead animal, you will admit, looks grand and beautiful from without; and yet, were you to remove its superincumbent weight of stones and mortar, you would find within only a rotten carcass, or the mouldering remains of bones; so also may a man be quite clean ceremonially, and yet within be full of malice, vice, and every repulsive sin.' We then explained to them the nature of sin and its demerit, and seriously urged them to transfer their faith from mechanical rites to the living God, and from the Law which condemns, to the Gospel which saves the sinner. They all replied in a loud tone of voice, in which the clear sounds of the women could be distinctly discerned: "You tell us good words, and God hath evidently sent you to teach and direct us into the right path!" We inquired whether any of them could read, and to our surprise there was not one in this crowded village who could spell a single word. Poor people! they live almost in Pagan ignorance, and die in Pagan hopelessness! In going away





FALASHA VILLAGE, ABYSSINIA.



MOSLEM VILLAGE, ABYSSINIA.



I said, ' You have now heard of a Saviour who died that all might eternally live, and whether you believe it or not, you will again hear of this matter ; but mind, it may not be from the lips of a messenger of mercy, but from the lips of Him who now seeks your salvation, and who, if you now reject His proffered mercy, will then pronounce your eternal doom.'

" Soon after daylight on Saturday morning we were on our way to *Defatsha*. The majority of the more holy were still in the *mesquid*, enjoying their frugal morning repast,—the offering of the previous day. Of course we did not venture to approach too closely the venerated edifice, but resumed our station on the old parapet, and, till the people assembled, enjoyed the delicious breeze, which, in cool and grateful gusts, came sweeping along the dew-covered trees. Gradually, from the *mesquid* and houses, men and women eagerly gathered around the preachers, and the lonely and quiet spot, where, a few minutes before, the sighing of the wind, as it gently brushed through hedge and tree, could be distinctly heard, was now all bustle, talk, and excitement. The question about the observance of the Sabbath, propounded by more than twenty voices at once, was quickly disposed of by a comparison of the two reasons assigned in Exodus and Deuteronomy, which we told them were both superseded by the higher obligation of sanctifying the day of redemption. We then discoursed on Sacrifices, and by numerous quotations from the Scriptures, demonstrated to them that every type and prediction, every sacrifice and offering, pointed to the Gospel for its meaning, and to the Saviour for its value ; and that thus when Christ came, men were prepared for His appearance, and looking for His coming. For more than an hour we uninterruptedly expounded to them the great doctrine of Divine revelation, from the Fall to the Cross—from the Curse to the Redemption. All were deeply impressed with what they heard, but particularly some young men, who, in imploring accents, entreated us to remain in Abyssinia, and teach them to know the Saviour. More than a hundred and fifty persons accompanied us a short distance, and we were already far down the steep declivity, when from many a torn and jagged cliff the echoes rang with their grateful blessings.

" Next morning one of the debterahs from the village Defatsha called on us for a Bible. He spoke most seriously, and like an anxious enquirer, said, in tremulous nervousness, as if his soul was agitated to its utmost depth, ' Before your arrival here no one told us that we were in the wrong ; we had our *Oreed* (Pentateuch) and David ; we observed the Sabbath, gave the priest their tithes, and so thought all was safe ; that the Christians, with their idols, Miriam and the saints, could have a superior, more scriptural, and more spiritual faith, was quite out of the question ; but now God hath sent you to teach us, and I trust we shall all profit by your instructions.'

“Our path along the tortuous course of the river Dimah was so densely wooded, that we were compelled to use every precaution—especially as our hair for some time had not undergone a clipping operation—to escape the fate of Absalom. The stars had begun to twinkle in the blue sky, the hyenas had attuned their piercing yells for the nocturnal revel, and still no village fire gleamed through the darkness, and no enlivening ditty from the village youths rang on the ear. We already thought that the wild jungle must be our home for the night, when, suddenly, shrill shouts of our people from the opposite bank told us that we were close to *Balankab*, a Falasha settlement. We at once forded the river, and exchanged the high-peaked and fatiguing saddle for the luxurious grass couch. This second day’s journey impressed us deeply with the magnitude and sacredness of our work, and, wearied and way-worn as we were, I believe both myself and companion would gladly, had it been possible, have forgotten all physical toils, and continued day and night our march through a land where hundreds and thousands of struggling, anguished, and despairing souls were longing for that message which can silence the upbraidings of conscience, and shiver the chains of superstition.”

Monasticism is an excrescence, which has sprung from various religious systems. The Jews have felt its influence. The lower the tone, and the greater the ignorance of the followers of any sect, the more ready have they been to pay honour to the ascetic, and to regard him either as a supernatural being, or as one endowed with peculiar power and holiness. The Christian revelation undermines and destroys these pretensions, and exposes the fallacies with which these honest visionaries, or designing knaves, work upon the credulity or superstition of the ignorant. These Jewish monks showed great dislike to Mr. Stern and his work, for they knew well that if the Falashas followed his instructions, their occupation would be gone.

“Being Christians, we were obliged to keep at a respectful distance from the home of Aboo Maharee and his monks. This precaution we had no cause to regret; on the contrary, we admired here and everywhere else the superior taste of the Falashas, which forces the stranger to seek shelter in the clean shady grove, and not in the foul and reeking hut. Whilst our companions went to announce our visit, we retired to one of the bowers into which nature had fashioned her own choice gifts. Our intention to encounter, in the arena of controversy, a high-priest so renowned for his lore and sanctity as Aboo Maharee, had been the subject of much speculation among the people, and it was generally reported that we would not venture to subject our creed to the chance of a



public defeat. The report of our arrival at *Balankab* dissipated this illusion, and multitudes, almost simultaneously with ourselves, arrived at *Zera Workee* to witness the interview. Many of the parties, in defiling before our sylvan retreat, prognosticated, in good Amharic, an unfavourable issue to our conference. The bustle and commotion, and the running to and fro, had continued for some time, when, suddenly, all stood still to behold the priestly procession emerging from the sacred enclosure. Aboo Maharee, the chief, swathed in a white *shama*, and holding a long bamboo staff, which in the distance looked like the crosier of a bishop, in dignified gravity moved in front of the heaving and undulating mass. There was something imposing and majestic in the appearance of the man, which one could scarcely behold without admiration and reverence. He is, I should think, about sixty years of age, of a noble and commanding figure, high and expressive forehead, melancholy restless eyes, and a countenance once no doubt mild and pleasing, but to which self-imposed penances and a repulsive practice have imparted an expression most strange and unearthly. Myself and companion rose simultaneously as he and his followers, in a well-ordered procession, approached, a compliment which all gratefully acknowledged; and then, as if by previous arrangement, the multitude squatted down on the right and on the left of our retreat, leaving a broad space, as the rubicon, between the polluted people and the holy priests. The whole assembly, in perfect bewilderment and wonder, stared at us with a stern, grave, and unmoved gaze, as if they wanted to penetrate our very thoughts, and read in our very looks their hope or despair, joy or sorrow. There sat the old monk, macerated and wan, with the brown skin hanging in loose folds around his wasted features, his eyes sunk and lustreless, from long mortification, or bright and sparkling with the mad fire of fanaticism. Close to this spectre-like apparition, as if seeking hope and comfort from mature age and sinking life, reclined the young novice, in whose placid and unnaturally smooth face the struggles of painful superstition, and perhaps the horrid consciousness that life, with its attractions and ties, had all been vainly bartered for a disordered dream and a wild feverish fancy, were too glaringly traceable.

“The other groups, among whom we noticed a good sprinkling of women, offered a strange contrast, by their healthy looks and smiling expressions, to these mutilated, dissatisfied, and unhappy priests. It is true, there was scarcely one in that assembly who had any doubt that these ascetics were self-denying, good men, who had renounced the world and all its fascinations, for a life of devotion and piety; yet there seemed, as if by a general sympathy, some secret apprehension, some latent fear, that, after all, these proud and secluded anchorites might be in error, and, instead of the substance, grasp a mere shadow—instead of revealed truth, cling only to a mere self-creative fancy. In conformity with Abyssinian eti-



quette, that a stranger should honour a Chief with a present, I gave to Aboo Maharee a gilt-edged Bible and a white dress, which, as he could not accept it from my polluted hand, he requested me to put into the bag of one of the priests. He was exceedingly pleased with this token of my regard, and after many elaborate thanks, all rose, and in a fervid and solemn strain, prayed for our safety, welfare, and happiness. It was a moving sight to see such a vast number of priests and people, all with uncovered heads and uplifted hands, supplicating the Divine blessing on the lonely and isolated missionaries.

"Several minutes elapsed before the effect of this touching scene subsided, and then, when all had again resumed their seats, we explained to them the object of our mission, and the motive by which we were actuated. Our words removed the fears which the malicious Amharas had excited, and we were unanimously solicited to state the essential truths of our belief. The most intelligent candidly confessed that our words were the echo of Moses and David, and that they would be happy to see us frequently among them, in order to discuss these weighty and important topics. Aboo Maharee, who had hitherto remained silent, now turned to me, and, in a faltering and tremulous voice, said, 'Either you will become one of us, or I shall become one of you.' They very much wanted us to stay with them all night; but we had no inclination to intrude our hungry retinue on the hospitality of priests, who must be their own cooks and bakers. Aboo Maharee would not, however, allow us to depart without some provision, and, reluctant as we were, he compelled us to accept a basket of *teff* and a *gumbo* of *dallah*. The worthy Chief, to convince us of his interest in our mission, ordered Debterah Negousee, a learned scribe, to conduct us to all the Jewish settlements. This amicable conference at Zera Workee produced the most favourable impression on the Falashas, and wherever we went, the report had already preceded us that we were the friends of Aboo Maharee.

"The cold, dull, and sullen morning had not yet been dissipated by the light of day, when several monks made their appearance. The object of their early visit was the universal desire to get copies of the Sacred Scriptures. We put them off till our arrival at Genda, whither they willingly promised to follow us. Our people being still in the huts, where they and their animals had been stowed, we had abundance of time to lecture these priests on the false character with which they invested themselves, as well as the unholy and sinful practice in which they indulged. They were quite appalled at the passage of Scripture which placed them in a category with the Ammonite and Moabite, and, to conceal their confusion, endeavoured to justify the continuance of sacrifices. By about nine a.m. we were on our way to *Fenja*. Here we met with several of the monkish fraternity. One of these, a haughty-looking fellow, to display his Biblical knowledge, edified us by relating the exploits

of the twelve tribes, whose names, unfortunately for his learning, he could not recollect. We told him that a little child in our country knew all these, and many other more important incidents, much better. Not at all checked by the rebuke, his voluble tongue sought scope for its bluster upon the glorious topic of the Aaronic priestly succession, and I do not know how long he might have rattled on had we not pointed him to Hosea iii. 4, 5. He thought this quite a sufficient reply, and wrapping his *shama* closely around his gaunt frame, he politely invited us to his settlement, and marched off."

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### MISSIONARY EFFORTS. CIRCULATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Missions to the Abyssinian Church had been for many years in existence. They had taken a distinctive form. The Basle Society conjoined with the efforts to propagate the Gospel, the employment of their agents in various trades and handicrafts. It was not unreasonable to believe, that instruction conveyed to the people, in matters which conferred some temporal advantage, might lead them to appreciate the more important object of leading them to Christ. The great danger of this combination, of the merely useful with the spiritual, was to the individual agents themselves. In the pursuit of the one, they might be tempted to overlook or undervalue the other. In Abyssinia, this danger assumed a very serious and demoralizing form. The presence of Europeans, acquainted with useful trades and occupations, with which the Abyssinians were not familiar, excited the special attention of the King. A monarch so despotic, was not likely to brook any reluctance to conform to his wishes. When to this was added the assurance of his favour, and the bestowal of special honours and advantages, it can be no matter of surprise, if the least decided and earnest, sooner or later relinquished the chief object of their mission, and gave themselves unreservedly to the secular service of the King. It is hardly too much to say, that there was but one honourable exception to this rule. Mr. Stern, with characteristic forbearance and magnanimity, never commented on the deficiencies which came constantly to his knowledge ; while he commended the Christian character and faithful consistency of the one, who failed not to adorn the doctrine of God

his Saviour. But the persons who transgress and exhibit unworthiness, are wont to quail before the presence of those who are eye-witnesses of their conduct, and the enmity of the human heart is never more active than towards those who become acquainted with this unworthiness. One fact created much feeling and irritation. During his visit to the island on Lake Tzana, Mr. Stern discovered several cases of Amharic Bibles. In one of his faithful journals he referred to this, and spoke of the immense value of this discovery, in providing him with an additional supply of Bibles, to meet the great demand of the Abyssinians for the Word of God. But it had been reported by the agents that all these Bibles had been distributed. Hence, much controversy and acrimony of feeling was exhibited, and every attempt was made to neutralize this indisputable fact. Mr. Stern took no notice of any comments which were made on his report. But when the subject was referred to, he only quietly smiled, and said, "All I can say is, that I found the boxes of Bibles there. I obtained permission from the King that they should be used, and no gift could have been more opportune or valuable." But the offenders did not forget what had happened; and their indifference to his sufferings, when on his second visit to the country he was bowed down with woe, can only be accounted for by the existence of vindictive pleasure, at the afflictions of the one who had given this truthful recital.

When speaking of his intercourse with two of these agents, Mr. Stern wrote:—"The visit of two Europeans in that wild and strange land, where I had not a friend or companion beyond parties of pestering, and importuning native mendicants, was indeed a great relief to my mind, in the utter loneliness and solitude to which, till the arrival of my companion, I should otherwise have been hopelessly doomed. My new acquaintances, who had been more than five years in the country, gave me much useful information about Abyssinia and its population. The King they held in high esteem for his probity of sentiment, purity of life, and singleness of purpose; but in reference to his subjects, they could only re-echo what I had from the first day noticed, that they were a false, treacherous, and insolent race—absurdly superstitious in their religious belief, and revoltingly obscene in their domestic relations,—

insolent to an inferior, and cringing and servile to a superior—at one time declaring that they had entirely departed from the faith of the Gospel, and a minute after, contending that their creed had the signet of St. Mark for its authenticity, and the example of wonder-working saints for its inviolable defence ;—a nation, in fact, so debased in mind and vitiated in heart, that, notwithstanding their physical and intellectual superiority to every other African tribe, they vie with all in truthlessness, cunning, and moral depravity.”

“Three of the small German colony, who had been confined in the Amba Magdala, the King, on his march to the Wollo country, liberated from their rocky home, and sent to establish themselves at Gaffat, on the hill formerly occupied by Mr. Plowden. Mr. Flad, one of this little exiled band, together with his partner, a well educated and self-denying deaconess from Dr. Flidner’s excellent Institute at Kaiserwerth, were quite an acquisition to our circle. This worthy couple, true to their high and holy vocation, in the midst of many troubles, discouragements, and privations, have, during the last six years, unweariedly laboured to disseminate God’s Word, both among the garrison at Magdala, and the peasants who, from all parts of Abyssinia, periodically supply the fort with provisions. Their efforts, though not cheered by much success, have not been altogether in vain. They have circulated hundreds of copies of the Scriptures, instructed numbers of Pagans and Amharas in the great truths of salvation, and, both by example and precept, in relieving the sick, and in affectionate and persuasive entreaties addressed to the healthy, have been wonderfully successful in removing much of native prejudice, and in scattering far and wide the seed of the everlasting Gospel.”

To the Falashas the Gospel message was full of interest, and occasioned anxious enquiry. To the native Christians, the Missionary gave his testimony concerning the true and unadulterated revelation of God’s love in His Son. But to the former—his brethren according to the flesh, he bore witness with a peculiar and unceasing solicitude. Some of his communications with them he thus describes :

“Our visit to *Anora* was returned by eighteen adults and Jerusalem, their Shum or civil Chief of the district—a Baal Kamees, or



nobleman by rank. We asked them many questions about their history and settlement, but all they knew was the old fable that Menilek, the son of the Queen of Sheba by Solomon, brought them to Abyssinia. Not wishing to dilate on this unprofitable topic, we diverged to another—the end and aim of the law. Like the Jews in Europe, they cherished the fanciful notion that by adhering to certain observances and ritual ceremonies, they were keeping the law, and justified before God. That the design of the moral and civil polity, revealed to Moses on Sinai and in the wilderness, was to wean the people from idolatry, and, by a long array of types, impressive ceremonies, and significant rites, to prepare them for the reception of a more ennobling, more spiritual, and more holy faith, even that of the Gospel, had never been heard among them; and consequently, they were not a little amazed when we told them that God, as their King, Benefactor and Deliverer, gave them regulations for their temporal conduct; and, as their final Judge, precepts to define the heinousness of sin, the necessity of an atonement, and that, too, not an atonement consisting in the blood or life of a slaughtered animal, but an expiation like that of the Redeemer, who, by sustaining our guilt, satisfied Divine justice, and supplied us with the means for the renovation of our fallen nature, and continual progress in holiness. We then pointedly adverted to their sacrifices, and from Deut. xii. plainly showed them that they were not only interdicted, but were actually sinful in a place not chosen by God. Some captious Christian debterahs now wanted to show their polemical acumen, but I promptly silenced them by asking whether they and their Church believed in the New Testament? One debterah, Selasse, a quiet, humble, and, I trust, enlightened man, quickly retorted, ‘We have a peculiar faith.’ ‘Then,’ returned I, ‘if you have a peculiar faith, it cannot be that of the Gospel; and if it is not of the Gospel, it is false!’ They admitted the justice of the censure, and without further interruption, listened most attentively to our conversation with the Jews.

“On the following morning, very early, Debterah Negousee, the teacher at Anora, together with two other Falashas, entered our room. Their sad and desponding looks were an unmistakable index of the unfavourable tidings they had to communicate. A long pause, during which nothing but their deep-drawn sighs were audible, made me unwittingly smile, and in a cheering tone I said, ‘Don’t be afraid to unburden your hearts, if you have no message of exile, prison, or immediate execution.’ My own apparent confidence imparted courage to our visitors, and they told us that their people had sent them to ascertain from us, personally, the truth of the rumour, that we wanted to make the Falashas Christians by force; ‘for if that statement is correct,’ they added, ‘we are commissioned to inform you, that every Jew and Jewess will resist, even to death, the faintest attempt at coercion; but if, on the contrary (and they will believe your words), you have come to teach them

truths that can be proved from God's Word, they will gratefully listen to your instructions.' We gave our unqualified denial to this report, which savoured of the intolerant Amhara, and in return requested them to inform the Jews, that we could not, would not, and dared not, as we were strangers, use violence towards any one of his Majesty's subjects; nay, more, they might solemnly aver in our name, that, if all the Falashas were ready and willing to be baptized, we would not administer that rite to a single individual without previous instruction and unmistakable evidence of conviction and conversion. They were delighted with the reply, and promised to report what we had said to all their people.

"At *Oilga* the priests and people gave us a cordial and hearty welcome. The four expounders of the law, anxious to retain the confidence of their flock, expatiated in a declamatory style on the long list of ritual observances enjoined in the book of Leviticus. We fully admitted that all that they had mentioned was of Divine origin, but, at the same time, we also reminded them that God required something more than ablutions, and the performance of certain rites and ceremonies, which only affected the body, but left unchanged and unconverted the sinful heart. In this obvious truth they tacitly acquiesced. The scope of the law was next discussed, and it was an affecting sight to witness the breathless attention which pervaded that assembly, as they heard for the first time of the love of the Gospel, in the types and figures of their own law.

"One of the priests, the best informed of the four, whose heart the truth of God's Word had evidently penetrated, in a voice choked by the deepest emotion, exclaimed, 'I am now too full to speak, but come to my village, for I want to converse with you alone, and also afford my people the opportunity of hearing the good tidings you proclaim.' We promised to accept his invitation, which so pleased him, that he ordered that portion of the Scripture which they possessed to be brought out; and, whilst the women were shouting their shrill *la, la, la*, and the priests were bravely intoning some verses on purification, we took our departure.

"The news of our arrival at Genda, which spread with almost incredible rapidity through the various districts far and near, attracted a vast concourse of Falashas to the spot where we had encamped. Our tent being too small to receive the numerous priests and their followers, we made a tree in front of our canvas dwelling—the usual court of the Genda administrators of justice,—the scene of our meetings and interviews. These open-air assemblies, however, soon threatened to become very boisterous and intemperate, on account of the great concourse of Christian debaters and priests, who thought this a splendid opportunity for the display of their polemical prowess against the Falasha infidels. To put a stop to the clamour and contest, we stationed some of our own and the Aboona's people around the green sward, and these,

together with several Christian debterahs whom we had enlisted in our service, kept perfect order and quiet amongst the wild and turbulent crowd. The Falashas, with their dark lustrous eyes rivetted upon us, sat motionless as statues while we dilated on various passages of Scripture in proof of the veracity of our faith, and its adaptation to meet the wants of the craving heart, and the upbraidings of the guilty conscience. We next discussed the mysteries of the Trinity, and, without burdening their minds with metaphysical sophistries and subtle reasonings, we simply explained to them the various prophecies which heralded the advent of the Redeemer, adverted to the numerous miracles which attested His mission, and lastly, gave an account of His sufferings and death, that sin might be cancelled and the sinner saved. Deberah Beru, the most intelligent man we met among the Falashas, was now urged to reply to our statements, but, as every objection which he advanced betrayed the impression produced on his own mind, he got up and walked away. A few days afterwards, he and two other debterahs (one a teacher who has a school of 94 children), came to us, and solemnly declared their convictions of the truth, and their earnest desire to be baptized."

With these ministrations, were associated the hungering and thirsting of the people for the Word of God. Even in countries in which no practical difficulty exists, in the way of every person becoming possessed of the Bible; when the Holy Ghost is outpoured, and when sinners are awakened from the slumber of sin, the Scriptures are studied and revered, as if hitherto they had been altogether unknown. How much more was this likely to be traced among a people, to whom their possession was at all times rare and uncertain! Among the native Christians such occurrences as this are narrated:—"The arrival of the travellers created quite a sensation in the village and its vicinity, and all hastened to have a peep at the white men. The commander of the troops, a tall, pleasant-looking *baal kamees*, who had formerly met Mr. Flad, came to renew the acquaintance. He was very talkative, and manifested a lively interest in our Mission to the Jews. Being anxious to obtain a New Testament, we gave him a copy in Amharic, out of which he immediately read several chapters to our motley assembly of armed and unarmed visitors. They all expressed their admiration and delight at the contents of the inspired volume, and wonderingly inquired amongst themselves, why their own priests kept truths so beautiful and sublime, disguised in a language no one could understand."

The caution and discretion which Mr. Stern exercised in the distribution of the Scriptures, and the eagerness of the Falashas to possess them, are illustrated in the following incidents:—"The notice of our arrival, which had been communicated to the different Falasha settlements in the district, brought all the priests and their friends to *Chamare*. The majority of these turbaned ecclesiastics had never seen a complete volume of the Sacred Scriptures, and their demand for copies far exceeded the stock at our disposal. Before we supplied any applicant, we invariably made him read a few verses, in order to test his acquaintance with the Amharic character. The passages we selected were either direct Messianic prophecies, or solemn appeals to the heart, and these important topics kept up without interruption the serious tone of our discussions."

"The desire to possess the written, was quite equal to the desire to hear the preached Word. From the lowlands of Quara, and the mountains of Semien, the scattered communities sent their deputations to secure for their respective settlements a copy of the sacred volume. One man, who had come to Genda from a distance of several days' journey, on his arrival found that we were gone. Nothing daunted, he grasped his pilgrim's staff and followed our track to *Chamare*. On meeting us, a visible sensation of joy broke abruptly over the dark features of the care-worn wanderer, and, in strains of eloquent sincerity, he preferred his request. Another man—a priest,—when he entered our tent, *naïvely* said, "I visited *Chamare* on business, and was just about to depart, when I heard of your approach. Well, thought I, these men love the Falashas, and are interested in their welfare, the God of Israel may therefore dispose them to give me a Bible for my people. Encouraged by this hope, I went up to your tent, but the crowd was so dense that I failed in gaining admission. The next day I heard you preach, and again, on the day following, I listened to a lengthy discussion. Many afterwards got Bibles, but, though I entreated most earnestly, God evidently did not dispose your heart to grant my request. Now this morning my hopes are again disappointed; but, as I am accustomed to walk, I shall follow you till God inclines your heart to yield to my prayers.' Such and similar pathetic appeals we heard almost daily; and, although we were unable to satisfy the importunate demands of all, yet we rejoiced to witness this spirit of anxious inquiry,—this yearning for the life-giving Word. Those who were happy enough to obtain the sacred volume, manifested their boundless gratitude by bringing us presents of fowls, milk, bread, &c., and those who came from a distance, and had nothing with which to make a return for the invaluable gift, prostrated themselves on

the ground, and, notwithstanding our entreaties, would kiss our hands and feet—aye, the very ground where we sat, in token of their heartfelt acknowledgment. Our great difficulty was, to transport the heavy Amharic Bibles across a country where sometimes, for hours, the path wound along a yawning abyss, or over a steep rocky height. The poor people, however, thought we could surmount every physical impossibility, and consequently, whenever we put off an applicant till our return to Genda, he would regard it as a denial to his request, and squat down near our camp, the very picture of despair.

“The sun was shining with its wonted brightness and dazzling splendour through a cloudless azure sky, when we loaded our animals and quitted the swampy plain. We had scarcely proceeded a mile, when, on looking back, we saw a party of Falashas running after us in breathless haste. Fearing that something serious had occurred, we slackened our pace, but, to our surprise, we found, when the panting group came up to us, that they were priests and debteraḥs from various settlements, some of whom (a thing seldom done in Abyssinia, on account of the numerous wild beasts) had been travelling the greater part of the night in order to overtake us, that they might thus secure copies of the Scriptures before our stock was exhausted. They had heard on the road of the fanatical monk, and in indignant language blamed his conduct. They accompanied us two miles farther to a Mohammedan village, where, for several hours, we dilated on the wonderful theme of redemption, which we showed, by numerous quotations, ran like a golden thread through every page of the inspired volume; speaking in one place through types and emblematic ceremonies, and in another by visions and prophecies; now appealing to the yearning affections of the heart, and then addressing itself to the reason and intellect; containing warnings of woe and wrath to the impenitent on one page, and promises of bliss and joy to the humble and contrite on the other. ‘In this way,’ we added, ‘God, in His infinite mercy, has solved for us every enigma, satisfied every doubt, and removed every false plea.’ They were very serious, and promised to attend our meetings, if we settled amongst them.”



## CHAPTER XXV.

### LAKE TZANA. MR. BELL. PROPOSED EMBASSY.

The time was now approaching for Mr. Stern's return from his most interesting and successful Mission. His travels had ranged through various portions of the Abyssinian Kingdom. He had in particular visited most of the districts in which the Falashas lived, and had been led to form a cheering opinion concerning the prospects of any missionary efforts which might be made on their behalf. He had secured the services of Mr. Flad as an agent of the London Society, and had engaged several of the most promising among the Falashas themselves, to organize schools for the purpose of giving to the people Scriptural instruction. In the prosecution of these objects, he had visited a variety of places possessing historic as well as local interest. Among these was one of the few lakes which appear to exist in that part of the African continent. Of Lake *Tzana*, and the verdant islet of *Matracha*, on which he became possessed of several copies of Amharic Bibles, he observed : " As we had business to transact with the *aliga* of the Church, we hailed a boat, and instantly a well-shaped lighter, built of colossal rushes, that grow in this inland sea, shoved off from the shore. The primitive craft, as it gently glided over the smooth and unruffled deep, forcibly reminded me of the prophet's vessels of bulrushes, to which it bore a striking resemblance. Several hippopotami, which were sporting in the water, excited the hostility of our people (who piously hated all unclean animals), and they applied to them the most insulting epithets they could find in their vocabulary. The huge puffing monsters, however, did not in the least heed the



LAKE TZANA AND THE ISLAND OF MATRACHA.



impotent rage of their assailants ; but, conscious of their strength and invulnerable skin, leisurely continued, in defiance of shouts and yells, to perform their customary aquatic evolutions."

From Mr. Bell, the trusted lieutenant of Theodorus, he had received the kindest attention and most generous support. From a state of practical indifference and irreligion, he had been awakened to hopes and desires, which too truly proved to be the harbingers of his death. Mr. Stern wrote :—"I invited Mr. Bell to attend the service which I had organized for the benefit of the few Europeans on our lonely hill. He readily assented to my proposition, and on the following Lord's-day was with us for several hours. More than twenty years had elapsed since he last joined in the prayers of the Church, or listened to an exposition of the Gospel from a Protestant minister's lips. The solemnity of the service, and the pathetic and thrilling appeals of the sacred volume to which he had so long been almost a stranger, evoked sad recollections and bitter memories of a life without a saving faith, and the anticipation of a future account without the recognition of a crucified Redeemer. The next day, in a letter to Mr. Flad, he expressed his unfeigned gratification at having spent the Sunday under our roof, and at the same time, in an earnest strain, requested him to become the guardian and executor of his will, should the next battle-field terminate his career. These gloomy forebodings proved but too true, for in a fight between Gerat and the King, which took place three months later, this brave and kind-hearted man, to the regret of a whole nation, nobly fell in defending the life of his Sovereign and friend."

Mr. Bell's death was a national calamity. He exercised a strong influence over the mind and movements of the King, and it was to that influence, in a great measure, that Mr. Stern imputed a probable course of life on the part of the imperious Monarch, which the future too sadly falsified. "King Theodorus, as is well known, has always manifested great partiality for Europeans ; and any project calculated to enhance the wealth of his empire, and the stability of his throne, is sure to meet with his countenance and support. Since the death of Mr. Bell, whose judicious counsels exerted the most happy influence on the conduct and actions of the despot, some unfavourable changes have characterized his proceedings ;

still it admits of little doubt that the present ruler of Abyssinia, with all his faults,—which the circumstances of his birth and the condition of his country must in some degree palliate,—is a man far in advance of his people in ideas and aspirations ; and, whether commercial enterprise is to find a new sphere, or the interests of oppressed humanity in Africa are to be promoted, by a little circumspection and proper judgment, these and other desirable objects may be surely advanced, whilst such a man as King Theodorus occupies the throne of Ethiopia. Hitherto, neither the Sovereign nor his subjects have had much opportunity for forming a correct estimate of the various sources of wealth that lie within their reach, or, what is of far greater import, of becoming acquainted with the beauty of that Gospel in which they so loudly profess to believe ; but, let the missionary quietly and judiciously pursue his evangelistic work ; let the fostering hand of trade develop the hidden treasures of the land, and an impulse will be given to industry, a stimulus to civilization, and a salutary power to law ; and the only nation in Central Africa bearing the name of Christian, and now, alas, notorious for vice, may yet become famous for ‘ whatsoever is honest, lovely, and of good report.’ ”

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE GUMARAH. JOURNEY THROUGH DEBRA TABOR AND GONDAR.

The scenery of Abyssinia is peculiarly impressive. The mountains and valleys are of the most picturesque character, and the crests of lofty hills are frequently crowned with beetling rocks, which have the appearance of castellated palaces, or immense fortifications. Through many parts of this country, Mr. Stern was conducted under an escort provided by the King, and accompanied on several occasions by Mr. Bell. The customs of the people, the superstitions of which they are the victims, and the impositions practised on their credulity, gave him the opportunity of commenting on the evil of these propensities, and setting forth the simplicity and truth of the Gospel. Some remarkable phenomena are described by Mr. Stern.

“As we advanced, the country became more wild, and the path more precipitous. Monkeys abounded in the trees, and also a few savage-looking boars prowled about the marshy banks of the numerous rivulets in search of roots, but no human being was visible except three miserable, haggard wretches, on whose countenances vice had traced its appalling characters, and these, like ourselves, were wending their way towards the celebrated medicinal hot springs. Late at noon we espied the deep-fissured gorge through which the river threaded its winding course. The descent being steep and overgrown with entangled shrubs and mimosas, we consigned our animals to the care of the servants, and scrambled, quite indifferent to the scratches inflicted on our hands and feet, down to the Gumarah, where, on a clean grassy spot, I was soon comfortably established.

“The hot mineral springs, which in large volumes well out of the dull, brown basalt rock, are situated on a sloping declivity, close to the river's edge. A small, insignificant building, raised over a

basin two feet in depth, into which the sanative water bubbles, constituted the bath for the lame, the blind, and the halt; whilst those who were afflicted with scrofulous, scorbutic, leprous, and other contagious diseases, had to perform their lavations in an enclosed pool a little lower down, where they enjoyed the double advantage of getting cool, as well as bathing in water already tested.

“These baths, which are continually surrounded by most haggard and ghastly objects, vividly reminded me of Bethesda’s pool. There were men and women, youths and maidens, all more or less branded by the indelible curse of depravity and vice. Some of these helpless creatures were squatted on the bare soil, some lay at full length in the sun’s fiery rays, and some leaned their aching frames for support against a rough stone, or the trunk of a decayed tree; but notwithstanding the incurable character of the maladies with which the majority were smitten, the cadaverous eyes of all watched with intense anguish for a vacancy in the two ever-filled kennel-like structures,—the only objects of their longing desire,—the only bright spots that shed beams of hope in their souls’ dark despair.

“My friend, Mr. Bell, whom a long residence in this country had rendered perfectly indifferent to mephitic influences, out of consideration to me, ordered the upper bath to be cleaned; but I had no desire to prevent any one of the numerous pitiful groups clustered around these imaginary health-imparting fountains, from enjoying the remedy on which they placed their vain expectations of a cure.

“Saints and demons, angels and fiends, whom the natives respectively bless or curse for whatever is good or bad in their country, come in also for a share of the virtues attributed to these salubrious springs. According to their legend, holy Kirkos, a man of no mean saintly repute, by his love for the truth and zeal for the Gospel, contracted the enmity of the unbelievers, who, to glut their revenge, awarded him a crown of martyrdom. The soul of the fictitious saint, released from its earthly thralls, winged its flight to the regions of the blest, but his mortal remains, uninterred by the miscreants, were devoured by large vultures called *amoras*, and his bones dropped near the *Gumarah*, on those very spots from which gush forth the healing waters—the incontestable proofs of his piety, and the everlasting memorials of his benevolence.

“To prevent these resorts of the sick and suffering from being overcrowded, the healing virtue of the water is restricted to seven days; after that period, their efficacy becomes neutralized; and should the patient delay his departure, he may be honoured for his temerity by a visit from the Nedititu, a race of graceless female Genii, who riot in carnage, and are reported to feast on human flesh. I had no inclination to protract my stay in this lazar spot of disease and ill-famed home of savage harpies, and therefore, after two days’ rest, I scaled again the lofty heights which rise almost perpendicularly on both sides of the *Gumarah*, and set out for *Gaf-fal*, near Debra Tabor, the capital of Begemeder.

"The ascent out of this gloomy dell, where every breath seemed tainted with the poison of incurable disease, brought us again into a cooler atmosphere, and a more exhilarating scene. My mule being fresh, and my servants well fed and greased, we moved along at a rate that startled many a wild beast out of its lonely haunt.

"The narrow untenanted valley of *Wanzagie*, which we had traversed by noon, brought us to a broken and precipitous range of rocks, an excrescence of the Alpine Guna. We halted a few minutes to recover our expended energy, and then, with a desperate effort, slowly and cautiously climbed up the rugged acclivities, where an unspeakably grand spectacle presented itself to our gaze. The whole country to the north and east, far beyond the limits of the eye's range, mountains and valleys, rocks and chasms, all lay bathed in one mighty mass of bright blazing fire. Not knowing which way to take, for the devouring element came crackling and hissing nearer to the spot where we stood, I turned to my servants, and inquired for the path we could safely pursue; but as they were in terror of the hyenas and leopards, whose howls and yells rang ominously through the illuminated night air, they only thought of their own safety; and, whether I followed or not, they sped on, between creaking trees and flaming grasses, towards a black spot, which was faintly visible through the fitful conflagration. The hot and clammy vapours, which every gust of wind drove straight across our path, parched our lips, and produced a suffocating sensation in our heaving chests; still we dared not stop, but were compelled to hasten on, in search of a safe retreat. Now and then the fierce blaze, leaping and tossing in uncontrollable rage over every opposing barrier, presented a sight that filled the beholder with wonder, awe, and delight. A huge mountain just opposite to our path, around which the lurid flame rolled its desolating flood, afforded a sight I shall never forget. Now the red fire lighted it up to its summit with an intense bright glow; now volumes of thin white smoke suffused it with ghastly hues; anon, again, the ever-shifting vapours shrouded it in impenetrable darkness. I watched for some time this grand rampart, which, like a rock amidst the lashing waves, bade defiance to the devouring elements, when suddenly a severe blast swept a fiery torrent through the blackened underwood, into furrows clothed with rank grass, and in an instant the white vapoury clouds, ignited by the freshening breeze, spread upwards and around till the whole mountain, to its wooded summit, flared and flickered in a blood-red flame, that diffused a glaring light for many miles over the surrounding country. The glowing sparks that fell in luminous showers from the burning trees expedited our march, and we were truly grateful when we reached the outskirts of this *Tophet*, with no other injury than a few blisters, and very sore feet. A peasant, near whose abode we alighted, hospitably offered us shelter under his roof, but the vast sheet of

fire which was still blazing in all directions, induced me to prefer fronting the approaching foe under the open vault of heaven, rather than in a dry and inflammable shed. Happily, our night's rest was not broken by the spread of the conflagration, and we rose from the clotty ground that had formed our common couch, a little aching in our limbs, yet refreshed enough to pursue our journey over the desolate, smouldering tract, towards the fertile fields and green meadows of Debra Tabor.

"It was mid-day before we came in sight of the hill around whose base and terraced sides clustered, gorgeously illuminated in the sun's meridian rays, a mass of mean, tottering huts, which, on a nearer view, I thought must have been purposely erected to give a name to the locality; though subsequent information convinced me that the miserable state of this royal city was the result of its frequent occupation by hordes of rapacious and profligate troops, who drove away all the families that were respectable, and, in their stead, peopled the vacant dwellings with a reckless multitude of the shameless, the dissolute, and the abandoned. A few isolated huts, of a larger size and superior construction, that stood on the brow of the hill, my servants pointed out to me as the future residence of the King and his newly-affianced bride, the daughter of his late captive, Ras Oubie, of Tigré. The unsightly and forlorn town, abounding with slimy puddles that afforded a luxuriant growth to a rank vegetation, and a number of shaky hovels, where foul and polluting vice held their perpetual carnival, presented a striking contrast to the lovely panorama of green fields, shady groves, lofty mountains and towering rocks, by which it was environed. I did not stay in this horrible place longer than was absolutely necessary for a hasty visit to the Governor, a bland debauchee, whose back and purse had already many a time—and that, too, without effecting any improvement—smarted under the lash of his royal master. He was all smiles and compliments; but as I knew how to interpret these, I put an end to the tedious interview by requesting a *bal-daraba* (an escort) to conduct me to Gaffat. An athletic young black, one of the Governor's own attendants, was immediately charged with my guardianship, and in the company of this cheerful and lively guide, we trudged on to our destination.

"A heavy shower of rain, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning and loud bursts of thunder, without any of the usual premonitory symptoms, most capriciously overtook us during the first half hour's march. Our people, accustomed to such freaks of nature antecedent to their winter, quickly folded up their *shamas*, and, with their nude backs exposed to the pouring torrents, merrily trod the saturated and slippery earth. The ascent up one of the rugged shoulders of the Guna, after a day's good toil, severely tested our aching and wearied limbs. We had already clambered an altitude of more than a thousand feet, when we heard a rumbling and rattling noise overhead, and, on looking in the direction of the sound,

we saw a hail-storm rapidly drifting towards us. Without an instant's delay, and as if pursued by a foe, all who were unencumbered with burdens, bounded, panting and gasping, in the direction of a grove of kosso-trees, which promised a safe retreat. Our porters no sooner saw the race, than they also imagined that their gun-proof skulls were in danger from the pelting hail; and, in the greatest consternation, threw down their loads, and scampered after us as fast as their fright and the slippery path allowed them.

"The hail, after half an hour's duration, abated, and we could venture, without danger either to head or eyes, to resume again our upland journey. It was a strange spectacle to see the whole country, which a little before was all smiling in vernal bloom, thus suddenly shrouded in a kind of unbleached mantle of wintry white; but Abyssinia is the land of extremes, and rain and sunshine, oppressive heat and chilling blasts, alternate almost regularly during the four months which constitute the winter season.

"The ascent increased in wild ruggedness as we advanced. On all sides dark and gloomy precipices obstructed the view, and terminated our path. Now we mounted a slippery height, where a false step would have hurled us into ravines of unfathomable depth; now we crept through a rocky cleft, along whose furrowed sides the melting hail leaped in foaming cascades; and now again, with hands and feet firmly fixed in the crumbling soil, we crept cautiously on all fours up a tortuous and shelving pathway, which terminated in a broad meadow or tract of pasture land. Here we found a little village to house our servants, when we pitched the tent, and on the wet grass, and in a pure and invigorating atmosphere, passed a most comfortable and refreshing night.

"Early in the morning, we made an excursion to the highest summit of the Guna. The air, when we started, was still raw, cold, and biting; but we anticipated that the rising sun would soon dispel the sharp frosty atmosphere, and diffuse a genial warmth over the wet and saturated earth. Our expectations were doomed to disappointment, for the bright lord of day had scarcely looked on the quiet creation that awaited his smiling beams, when, instead of imparting the usual fresh tinge of the rose to the towering mountains and undulating dells, he tantalized us by wrapping every hollow and hill in a winding sheet of ghastly death. The steaming vapours unrolled themselves at first in the lower regions, but gradually they rose higher and higher; now encircling with a silvery cestus a huge isolated cliff, and now, again, obscuring the bold outlines of an inaccessible mountain range. We already regretted our expedition, and longed to be ensconced under the snug canopy of our canvas; but as to retreat would have been quite as difficult as to advance, we resolved to defy the chilling, clammy fog, in order to accomplish our object. The guides, who were as much at home in the labyrinthine confusion of these alpine heights as in their own



sooty huts, carelessly threaded their way through the dense gloom, whilst we, conscious of numberless dangers, were almost afraid to move.

"A quivering, rainbow-like gleam was now visible on the western horizon, but its unsteady light kept us for a few minutes in doubt whether to attribute it to lightning, or the piercing beams of the sun's rays. Our gaze, which was intently fixed on that glimmering spot, did not linger long in uncertainty, for a few gusts of wind which came sighing through the fissures and clefts of the rocks, burst the heaving vapoury curtain, and unfolded to our enraptured sight a scene indescribably grand and magnificent. There, to the north, rose, in every imaginable shape and form, the mountains of Bellessa, from whose hoary summits and sloping declivities, hundreds and thousands of bold warriors have often poured down, to defend their religion and home against the inroads of pagan Gallas, and the assaults of Mohammedan conquerors; westward spread the noble, broad plain of Dembea, intersected by numerous groves and villages, with the Tzana to protect it towards Alafa and Dagossa, and a dark belt of indistinct hills for its ramparts on the side where it abuts on Tschelga and Quara; to the right, and far away in the airy distance, could be traced, in a south-south-westerly direction, the faint outlines of Godjam, the land where coffee grows and gold is found, and where the blue Nile, one of the sources of Egypt's fertility, has its rise; whilst a sombre shadowy line along the blue sky in the north-east, defined the chain of rocks and mountains which encircle with an adamantine wall the sacred pilgrim-land of Lasta.

"I could have loitered here, in communion with nature and nature's God, for many, many hours, had not the effect of the atmosphere, at this elevation of 14,670 English feet above the level of the Mediterranean, been too oppressive to my lungs; and, unwilling as I felt to move, a suffocating sensation drove me from the rocky and barren summit. The vegetation, which at the highest altitude consisted only of some lichens and heather, 2000 feet lower down was of a rich verdure, enamelled with beds of lovely-coloured lilies and the tapering *jubara*, a species of huge lobelia.

"The general anxiety to reach *Gondar*—the capital of Abyssinia, and the loadstone of the natives—before evening, imparted fresh strength and elasticity to our footsore people, and they bounded along at a rate that would have entitled them to the prize had they been running a race. A brisk march of several hours brought us to the *Magatch*, which is spanned by a bridge of five arches. There we met a good number of people who were on their way to the market of the metropolis. The commodities which they had for sale or barter, were of the most motley character conceivable. Here was a man sweating under a heavy bag of teff; and, a little farther on, walked a woman carefully supporting on her elaborately-curled head, a crushing *gumbo* of honey. Now passed a whole group charged



GONDAR, THE CAPITAL OF ABYSSINIA.



with garlic and onions, chillies and pepper ; in a few minutes more came a procession of donkeys, almost smothered beneath bulky and shapeless bales of lowland cotton ; and anon, the rugged and steep highway was blocked up by droves of oxen and cows, destined to furnish broundo joints to the inhabitants of the royal city. The peripatetic speculators in the animal and vegetable creation of Ethiopia gazed at us in wondering surprise, and, for the nonce, business was merged in the conjectures excited by the visit of the strangers. They were all exceedingly civil to us, and we passed without inconvenience through the steaming and gaping crowd.

“The animated scene, presented by the multitude hurrying to market, beguiled the tediousness of our journey, and brought us in less time than we anticipated to the capital of King Theodorus. His Grace the Metropolitan, having kindly placed the archiepiscopal residence at our disposal, we made straight for *Kudus Gabriel*, where the Primate’s steward, who had already been apprised by a special messenger of our intended visit, gave us a hearty and cordial reception.

“I sallied forth at the first flush of day, to have a quiet and undisturbed view of Gondar. An overhanging grassy platform in the rear of our premises, just opposite the Gimp, or castle, afforded me the best position for satisfying my curiosity. Standing on that spot, I beheld, as in a shifting panorama, the various groups of houses and churches which occupy the northern and south-western side of this strange city. The widely-separated and distinct clusters of houses, interspersed with fields and trees, presented, in the golden glow of the morning, a very striking and pleasing sight. There, just beneath my feet, in a deep ravine, overlooked by several conically-shaped huts, a sparkling brook leaped over its rocky bed, down to the river Gaha, where, almost in the sight of the populous Mohammedan quarter, called Islam Beit, Mr. Plowden the English Consul, received his deathblow from a freebooter’s lance. From this glen, up on a verdant heath, lay the Etchequé Beit, where the ecclesiastical head of the monks, and the more respectable inhabitants, have their dwellings. On the left of that irregular elevation stretched Bada, with its large church and extensive groves, crumbling walls and squalid hovels ; and quite on the summit, beyond the eye’s ken, gleamed in the blazing sun the tottering towers and ruined halls of the once stately, but now decayed and almost uninhabitable palace.

“We had now been nineteen days at Gondar, and not thinking it advisable to protract our stay, we set out again on our missionary journey. Our route was west-south-west across the hills, which, like Cyclopean embattlements, encompass Gondar. At *Assaso*, a suburb, an hour’s distance from the metropolis, there are still some gardens and a church which remind the vain Abyssinian of the superiority of the Franks, who saved Ethiopia from the yoke of Islamism, but injudiciously endeavoured to impose on her the no



less detested manacles of Popery. Here we re-arranged our books, which pressed heavily on the saddlebacks of our mules, and then through a steep and narrow defile pushed on to *Maneger Gabriel*, a hamlet hidden in a forest of acacias, wanza, worka, and other tropical trees and plants. We had some difficulty in extricating our feet from the rank weeds and tangled parasites, which everywhere barred our onward progress. Bruised and bleeding, we reached the Shum's hut, and there, in a field of pumpkins, we cleared a small space for our tent. After a supper of excellent milk, and an abundance of vegetables, a luxury we had not enjoyed for many weeks, we retired to rest, and, reclining on soft grass and aromatic herbs, slept, in defiance of mosquitoes and hyenas, quite as soundly in the African wilderness as we could have done in the most luxurious chamber in the heart of civilized Europe.

"With the first streaks of day we were at our morning's devotions; we then drank a cup of bitter coffee (the luxury of sugar being unknown in Abyssinia), and thus strengthened and refreshed in body and spirit, we started again on unknown and unbeaten tracks. Our score of servants were not so expeditious as ourselves. A large pot of peppered pumpkins was still on the fire, and till this was devoured they moved about as if their feet were paralyzed and their hands palsied. Had we been pressed for time, we should have ordered them to stow their repast in a skin, and eat it on the road: but as we had to visit a Falasha village in the neighbourhood, it would have been wanton cruelty to tear them away from the bubbling and seething pot.

"There is something cheering and inexpressibly pleasant in a tropical morning on the highlands of Abyssinia, more particularly so, when, as in our case, gratitude swells the breast, and hallowed visions cheer the mind. Isolation and loneliness are then entirely forgotten, and one hurries, without any sensation of fatigue, to the places mapped out for the day's toil. The balmy air, and the lovely landscapes which, as in a panorama, float in rapid succession before the enraptured sight, preclude any desire for rest until noon approaches, and a meridian sun hushes every breath, and drives man and beast to seek shelter from its fiery blaze."



## CHAPTER XXVII.

### ABYSSINIAN SUPERSTITIONS. THE BOUDA. THE ZAR.

The twin-sisters of superstition and unbelief occupy some measure of ground in every country of the world. The intelligence of the human mind revolts against the degradation to which pagan, heathen, or so-called Christian superstitions, lower every faculty. The unbelief of paganism assumes a coarser and more revolting form than that of the scientist; but it is always contemporaneous with the attempt to dominate over the human mind by the introduction and spread of sacerdotal influence.

Mr. Stern's narrative contains some statements which reveal the social and religious state of Abyssinia. Many of the phenomena to which he alludes are unaccountable, and would be regarded with distrust had they not fallen under the personal observation of a witness so reliable. How far the Evil One is permitted to exercise an influence in the affairs of mankind, has always been the theme of discussion and difference of opinion. But the concurrent testimony of all who have studied such strange occurrences as those about to be related, testify, that it is over the weak and impressionable that pretenders to the supernatural have power. In all parts of the world, it is notorious that, under some extraordinary impulse, persons have been enabled to accomplish objects, which were altogether unattainable, under the normal conditions of life.

"In dilating on the ills the Ethiopian is heir to, the Bouda and Zar must not be forgotten, since they occupy a most prominent place in the catalogue of evils which torture the brown-skinned children of the sun. Of the two, the Bouda, or sorcerer, as the word signifies, is the most dreaded. His powers in the black art

are reported to be of a most varied character. At one time he will enslave the objects of his malice ; at another, he will subject them to nameless tortures ; and not unfrequently his vengeance will even compass their death. Like the Genii and Efrets of the Arabian Nights, the Bouda invariably selects those possessed of youth and talent, beauty and wit, on whom to work his evil deeds. Those most profound in magic skill are the inhabitants of Damot, some Godjamees, and the workers in iron and brass, a trade almost exclusively monopolized by the poor despised Falashas. A variety of charms have been invented to counteract the Bouda's power, but the most potent and expensive are the amulets written by pious debtera's, and worn round the neck. The dread of the sorcerer has introduced a whole tribe of exorcists, who pretend to be able both to conjure the evil spirit, and also to detect his whereabouts ; and these are, accordingly, held in great awe by the people. Their traffic resembles in every respect that of the highwayman ; with this difference only, that the one, in bold and unblushing language, calls on his victim to stand and deliver, and the other stealthily creeps into the midst of a troop of soldiers, or amongst a convivial party of friends, and pronounces the mystical word Bouda. The uncouth appearance and sepulchral voice of the exorcist everywhere produce the deepest sensation ; and young and old, men and women, gladly part with some article, to get rid of his hated and feared presence. If, as sometimes happens, one or two less superstitious individuals object to these wicked exactions, the exorcist has a right to compel every one present to smell an abominable concoction of foul herbs and decayed bones, which he carries in his pouch. Those who unflinchingly inhale the offensive scent are declared innocent, and those who have no such strong olfactory nerves are declared Boudas, and shunned as allies of the Evil One. In the time of Goshu Beru's rule in Godjam, hundreds were executed on the suspicion of being Boudas ; and even King Theodorus, till within the last few years, when he began to study God's Word, continually sanctioned these judicial murders.

"During the rainy season, when the weather, like the mind, is cheerless and dull, the Boudas, as if in mockery of the universal gloom, celebrate their saturnalia. In our small settlement at Gaffat, the monotony of our existence was constantly diversified by a Bouda scene. Towards the close of August, when every shrub and tree began to sprout and blossom, the disease degenerated into a regular epidemic ; and in the course of an evening, two, three, and, not unfrequently, every hut occupied by natives, would ring with that familiar household cry. A heavy thunderstorm, by some mysterious process, seemed invariably to predispose the people to the Bouda's torturing influence.

"I remember one day, about the end of August, we had a most terrific tempest. It commenced a little after midday, and lasted till nearly five o'clock. During its continuance the air was com-

pletely darkened, except when the lightning's lurid blaze flashed athwart the sky, and relieved, for a few seconds, the almost midnight gloom. No human voice could be heard amidst the thunder's deafening crash, and the torrent's impetuous rage; everything above, beneath, and around, seemed in the agonies of dissolution, and it required no stretch of the imagination to believe that the wails and dismal groans, which rang on the ear, were the war-whoop of evil spirits engaged in a frantic and deadly contest.

"The noise and tumult of the striving elements had scarcely subsided, when a servant of Mr. Mayer, a stout, robust, and masculine woman, began to exhibit the Bouda symptoms. She had been complaining the whole noon of languor, faintness, and utter incapacity for all physical exertion. About sunset her lethargy increased, and she gradually sank into a state of apparent unconsciousness. Her fellow-servants, who were familiar with the cause of the complaint, at once pronounced her to be possessed. To outwit the conjurer, I thought it advisable to try the effect of strong liquid ammonia on the nerves of the Evil One. The place being dark, faggots were ignited; and in their bright flickering light we beheld a mass of dark figures squatted on the wet floor around a rigid, motionless, and apparently dead woman. I instantly applied my bottle to her nose; but although the potent smell made all near raise a cry of terror, it produced no more effect on the passive and insensible patient, than if it had been water from the newly-formed rivulets.

"The owner of Gaffat, an amateur exorcist almost by instinct, as if anticipating something wrong in that part of his domain occupied by the Franks, made his appearance in the very nick of time. This bloated and limping dotard, who had wasted his youth and manhood in folly and vice, for which, in his old age, he seeks to atone by discarding one after the other of his former wives, and by poring over the legends of saints and martyrs, no sooner hobbled into the hut than the possessed woman, as if struck by a magnetic wire, burst into loud fits of laughter and the paroxysms of a raving maniac. Half a dozen stalwart fellows caught hold of her, but frenzy imparted a vigour to her frame, which even the united strength of these athletes was barely sufficient to keep under control. She tried to bite, kick, and tear every one within reach; and, when she found herself foiled in all these mischievous attempts, she convulsively grasped the unpaved wet floor, and, in imitation of the hyena, gave utterance to the most discordant sounds. Manacled and shackled with leather thongs, she was now partly dragged and partly carried to an open grassy spot; and there, under the starry vault of heaven, and in the presence of a considerable number of people, the conjurer, in a business-like manner, began his exorcising art.

"Three other women had similar attacks that same evening, and that, too, without any premonitory symptoms. I tried to deceive

one, and, instead of the disgusting concoction, put a wooden dish with bread and water in her way; but on smelling it, she shrank from its contents, and rapidly crept on till the strong effluvia brought her to the spot where the loathsome viands were concealed. Some conjurers are so expert in their art, that even at a distance they can control those under the influence of the nameless. A case of this kind, which occurred at Magdala, was narrated to me by an eye-witness. In this instance, the possessed was a young girl of attractive appearance. Her friends and companions, who at once suspected the Bouda symptoms, despatched a messenger to the exorcist; but, as he was then in a lazy mood, he commissioned a menial to conduct her to his own abode. The raving and frantic girl, upon receiving this summons, immediately relaxed in her violent frenzy, and grasping a huge and ponderous stone, she lifted it on her head and calmly followed her guide.

"In small villages and settlements, where no conjurer is at hand to exorcise the familiar spirit, the paroxysm of madness will spend itself in an hour or two; but the sufferer, worn out and prostrate, sinks down into a feverish lethargy and stupor, from which, I was assured by reliable individuals, few ever awake.

"This curious malady, which Abyssinian credulity ascribes to the direct possession of the Wicked One, I am inclined to believe, from the details communicated to me by European residents, may be traced to far more natural causes than those assigned by the natives. The very persons most subject to the Bouda influence are, in themselves, a proof that, however puzzling the cure may be, there is no mystery about the origin of the disease. Among the numerous cases which came under my own notice, I ascertained that the sufferers, invariably, had either been afflicted with a disordered imagination, or shaken by much excitement or depression in their nervous system. The more intelligent natives admit that the sober, moral, and virtuous of both sexes enjoy immunity from the demon's power; whilst, on the contrary, those who indulge in morbid fancies, luxuriate in sinful indulgences, and riot in dissolute habits, are seldom, if ever, entirely free from the fear of a sudden attack.

"Next in importance to the Bouda is the Zar. This malady is exclusively confined to unmarried women, and has this peculiar feature, that during the violence of the paroxysm it prompts the patient to imitate the sharp, discordant growl of the leopard. I recollect that the first time I saw a case of this description, it gave me a shock which made my blood run cold. The sufferer was a handsome, gay, and lively girl, a little above fifteen. In the morning, she was engaged as usual in her work, when a quarrel ensued between her and other domestics. The fierce dispute, though of a trifling character, roused the passions of the fiery Ethiopian to such a pitch, that it brought on an hysterical affection. The natives all cried, 'She is possessed!' and certainly her ghastly smile, nervous

tremour, wild stare, and unnatural howl, justified the notion. To expel the Zar, a conjurer, as in the Bouda complaint, was formerly considered indispensable ; but by dint of perseverance, the medical faculty of the country, to their infinite satisfaction, have at length made the happy discovery that a sound application of the whip is quite as potent an antidote against this evil as the necromancer's spell. Neither in the above, nor in any other instance that occurred among our own people, had we recourse to this remedy ; but, instead of it, we made the patient inhale strong spirit of ammonia ; and, if this failed, we left her to herself, and in a day or two she would again recover her impaired senses and wonted health.

"In bringing this demoniacal subject to a close, I am forcibly reminded of the words, 'Be sure your sin will find you out.' That there is something in these diseases, and in their mode of cure, which transcends ordinary disorders, no one who has stood beside a frantic and agonized patient, and wondered at the sudden and more than dramatic transition from raving frenzy to childlike docility, can well deny ; but without deciding whether it is epilepsy, catalepsy, or hysteria, I am quite sure that fiends and spirits have less to do with the matter, than the irregular life and dissolute course which so many pursue."

And now that our Missionary friend is about to retrace his steps through jungles, arid plains, and mountain passes, to his allotted work in Europe ; a circumstance should be chronicled, which has an important connection with events which hereafter are to be noted. On one of the many occasions in which Mr. Stern had free and unreserved converse with the King, he made a variety of inquiries concerning the state of Europe,—the practice and belief of the various nationalities,—the extent of their armies, and the nature of their warfare. "He was," wrote Mr. Stern, "surprised to hear that in Christian countries prisoners of war were generously treated, and women and children, youth and innocence, exempted from all penalties." The reply of Theodorus was this :—"You are superior to us in all things ; and if God permit, I shall soon send an Embassy to England, to open the eyes of at least a few of my people." The sequel will show, that such an Embassy was proposed to the British Government, and treated with silent disdain and indifference. And that sequel will also show, that the absence of that courtesy and statemanship, which ought to characterize the administration of the foreign as well as the domestic affairs of our country, led to incalculable suffering, perplexing political entanglements, and a vast expenditure.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### RETURN FROM ABYSSINIA. PASSING EVENTS.

#### THE BRITISH CONSULATE.

The unsettled state of the country, between Abyssinia and the coast of the Red Sea, obliged Mr. Stern to return to Cairo by the same route as that by which he had entered the scene of his labours. He would, to some extent, profit by the experience which he had acquired during that long and toilsome journey, and make such arrangements as might be more favourable to his progress. But the risks and inconveniences, and the tedium, of a line of travel, which depended so entirely upon the good-will of the semi-barbarous people, were necessarily of the same character. It was therefore with devout thankfulness that his numerous friends, and the Committee of the London Society, heard of his safe arrival at Cairo.

In the year 1858, the Society had commemorated its Jubilee. Among the objects to which it was decided that the Jubilee Fund should be devoted, was that of exploratory journeys in distant regions inhabited by Jews not previously reached by its ordinary agencies. That which Mr. Stern had so vigorously undertaken, and so successfully accomplished in Abyssinia, fulfilled these conditions ; and added to the pages of the Society's history another remarkable evidence of the importance of its work, and the blessings with which that work had been accompanied. Their faithful and indefatigable Missionary had, so far as the materials and circumstances permitted, organized an agency, by which the seed he had sown might be watered and tended. The interest which the Falashas

had taken in his message had been deepened by conviction, and there was abundant reason to believe, in many instances, by their conversion to God, and their conscientious reception of the truths of the Gospel. Under the direction of Mr. Flad and another agent, several of the most enlightened and best instructed, were appointed to labour among their own people—and in the training and education of the young. A happy confidence filled the heart of the Missionary, that there was a deep reality in what he had seen, and the testimonies which had come to his knowledge of the sincerity of the enquiries. However inadequate to the wants of this great Mission field, it was a satisfaction to know that a new agency had been created; and that, in proportion to the means employed, in the providence of God, there was every reason to believe that the results would be encouraging.

Mr. Stern was summoned by the Committee to proceed from Cairo direct to England, in order that from his own lips the friends of Israel might receive full information concerning the events and results of his most interesting journey. He arrived in England in April, 1861. His family had been removed from Constantinople to England, accompanied by Miss Purday, who had, during the lengthened absence of the head of the household, on his various missionary journeys, been to Mrs. Stern, a most useful and sympathizing sister. They had been quietly settled in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis, where they continued from that time to reside. It was with no ordinary joy that the arrival of Mr. Stern was welcomed. In all parts of the country large and enthusiastic meetings were held, in order that he might narrate the events of his journey, and give information concerning a country of which little had been written, and a people of whom still less was known.

During this period, some communications were passing between Abyssinia and the Foreign Office of Great Britain. The steps taken in former years by the Foreign Office had cleared the way for any diplomatic relations which might be established between the two countries. The events of the future can only be understood by reference to what had transpired in the past.

About the year 1843, Abyssinia was visited by an active and enterprising young Englishman, Mr. W. Plowden. His residence

in that country extended over a space of five years, during which time he took every opportunity of making himself acquainted with the inhabitants, and the industrial and commercial resources of the various States into which it was divided. He then revisited England, and obtained an interview with Lord Palmerston, before whom he laid the result of his own personal experience, and urged that a field so important should not be neglected by the Government. The sagacity of the British Statesman approved of the suggestion; and Mr. Plowden, without any solicitation on his own part, was appointed to be British Consul at Massowah, the port on the Red Sea, through which there was the most direct communication with the interior. But Massowah was to be only the base from which his professional duties were to be carried on. Its population was insignificant and uncertain—its trade inconsiderable. The Consul was therefore instructed to promote in any way in his power, commercial relations between Great Britain and Abyssinia,—to use means for the suppression of the slave trade,—to exercise his influence for the preservation of peace between Egypt and Abyssinia, and to watch and counteract the intrigues of other foreign countries. Ras Ali was then the most powerful of the Abyssinian Chieftains, and he was charged to convey presents to him, and, if possible, to conclude a treaty. For more than six years Mr. Plowden carried out the important duties with which he had been entrusted, returning from time to time to Massowah, but spending most of his time in Abyssinia proper, in the barbarous Court of Ras Ali, and subsequently in that of King Theodorus. It is also important to understand, that neither he nor his successor, Captain Cameron, ever received the slightest intimation, in their regular correspondence with the Foreign Office, that they exceeded their instructions, or had entered any Province or State, contrary to the rules laid down for their guidance. He left Massowah on his last visit into the interior on the 25th of March, 1855, and in 1860, on his return homewards, he was slain in a skirmish, into which he had been accidentally drawn.

In June, 1852, the predecessor of Theodorus had entered into a treaty with England, in which occurred this article: "Her Britannic Majesty engages to receive and protect any Ambassador,

Envoy, or Consul, whom His Majesty of Abyssinia, or his successors, may see fit to appoint, and will equally preserve inviolate all the rights and privileges of such Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul."

On the death of Mr. Plowden, Captain Cameron was appointed to succeed him. The very nature of Mr. Plowden's death might have justified the Foreign Office in laying down some strict limits beyond which his successor was not to pass. But practically, the former instructions were confirmed, and Captain Cameron's principal duties lay in direct and personal communication with the Court of Abyssinia. On the 2nd of February, 1861, a despatch was sent to him couched in the following terms:—"Your first duty, on arriving at Massowah, which you will consider as the head-quarters of your Consulate, will be to make yourself acquainted with the general state of political affairs in Abyssinia. Her Majesty's Government are so imperfectly informed of what may have happened in that country since the death of your predecessor, that I am unable to lay down any very precise rules for the guidance of your conduct." "It will be your duty closely to watch any proceedings which may tend to alter the state of possession, either on the sea-coast or in the interior of the country." It would have been impossible for Captain Cameron to observe the directions which were thus conveyed to him, if he had remained at Massowah, which was Turkish or Egyptian territory; and had never, by personal observation and intercourse with its rulers, obtained correct information concerning the state of Abyssinia. When Mr. Stern first arrived in the country, those relations were recognized, and the Representative of England was treated with becoming honour and respect.

Further intercourse with Europeans, and especially the few whose character and objects were so ennobling as those of Mr. Stern, had convinced Theodorus that it would be to the advantage of his kingdom if an Embassy were sent to England. We have already seen how strongly he expressed himself to this effect to the Missionary, and how he desired, that the Queen of the greatest Empire of the world, might receive from his hands an appeal for closer relations between her country and his own. This intention was duly carried out, and the royal message was conveyed to England, and

deposited at the Foreign Office. In that letter to the Queen, the King wrote thus :—"Consul Cameron arrived with a letter and presents of friendship. By the power of God, I was very glad hearing of your welfare, and being assured of your amity. I have received your presents, and thank you much. I fear that, if I send Ambassadors with presents of amity by Consul Cameron, they may be arrested by the Turks. And now I wish that you may arrange for the safe passage of my Ambassadors everywhere on the road. I wish to have an answer to this letter by Captain Cameron, and that he may conduct my Embassy to England."

Often might the historian desire to record, if it were possible, that all communications intended for the Royal eye, reached the throne direct, without any official intervention. The wisdom and perception of our Sovereign, had they free exercise, would doubtless obviate many of the intricate and perilous embroglios into which we have at times been plunged, either by the incompetence, or by the procrastination and indifference of those who hold the seals of office. And so it came to pass, that, with Earl Russell at the Foreign Office, the letter of King Theodorus was treated with contempt, and not the slightest intimation conveyed to the Representative of Great Britain, that his desire to send an Embassy to England would be favourably recognized, or otherwise. To a man believing in the overwhelming greatness and power of his own country and his people—one who had, in time past, by indomitable energy and courage gained remarkable successes, and exercised a despotic and tyrannical power—such neglect of his request was most galling. He chafed incessantly under this humiliation, and reproached the Consul for dereliction of duty. The further communications to the Foreign Office of Captain Cameron, were treated with the same silent indifference; and it became more than difficult to calm the angry Monarch's indignation, by assuring him that the delays were the usual antecedents to a gracious and complete acquiescence in his desires. While Mr. Stern was actively engaged in enlisting the sympathies of large English assemblies in the cause of the Falashas, and the welfare of Abyssinia, the political atmosphere of that country was becoming charged with clouds; and the mutterings of that terrible storm began to be heard, which was eventually to



burst with all its violence on his devoted head. The responsibility of all the troubles and expenditure which ensued, devolve on the Foreign Office, and on those who at that time conducted the Government of this country.

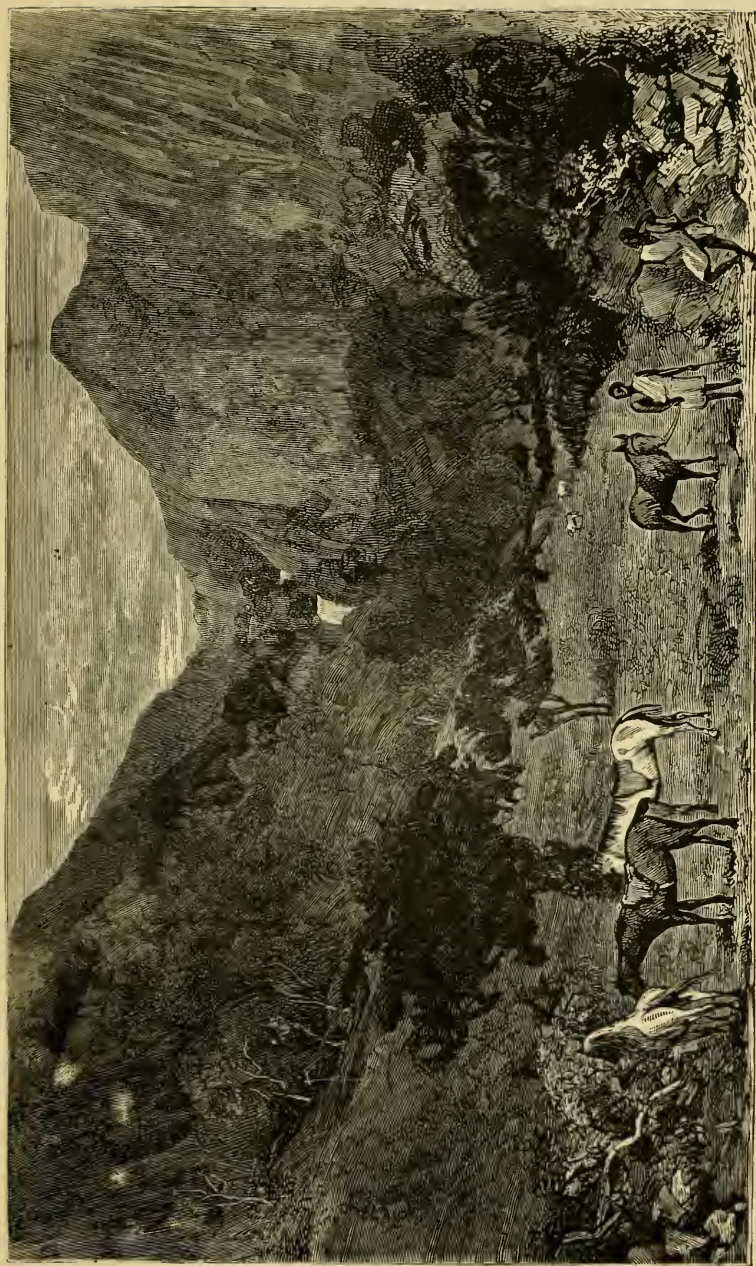
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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### ABYSSINIA RE-VISITED.

The part of the Biography upon which we are about to enter is identified with the history of England. Hitherto Mr. Stern's life and labours have only been so far public, that they have been associated with an enterprise which was fitted to enlist the benevolence and interest of Christians of every land. But now, he will be found to occupy a place in our national history, and to have his niche in that temple of fame and of suffering, which must endure as long as any chronicles exist of our nation's progress and greatness.

The intelligence which reached the London Society, from time to time, concerning the Mission in Abyssinía, was most encouraging and interesting. A letter, written in Amharic, had been received by the Committee, in which, among other expressions, the converts said :—" May this letter reach the Society in England who sent Bibles and Teachers, to the dispersed children of Israel, in Ethiopia. It is sent from the Falashas at Genda, who believe in Jesus Christ. . . And now, our dear fathers, take us into your care, and pray for us, that we may receive the grace of our Lord, and be established in it; for we are like tender plants, which have not been sufficiently rooted." These converts from among the Falashas had exhibited a measure of personal piety, and a devotion to the work and service of God, which conveyed the fullest assurance that the Spirit of God was honouring and strengthening this infant Church. But there was much to indicate that its organization was incomplete, and that it was very desirable that the mind which first directed, and the hand which first adjusted the crude materials out of which the structure was to be raised, should be again employed in superintending its further developement and completion.



MISSIONARY HALTING-PLACE IN AN ABYSSINIAN VALLEY.



Mr. Stern was still in England, advocating the cause of the London Society, when the Committee came to this conclusion. On hearing that it was considered expedient that he should undertake another journey into Abyssinia, with his usual readiness to enter upon any work to which the Lord had called him, he placed himself at the disposal of the Committee. He had been so impressed by the genuine and earnest desire of the Falashas to receive "the Truth as it is in Jesus," that he welcomed the probable opportunity of again ministering to these, his spiritual children, "to the end," that they might "be established."

Mr. Stern left England in September, 1862, and was joined by Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal at Alexandria. They journeyed by the Red Sea to Massowah, from which port they proceeded to Abyssinia. They remained for a time at Manwoloo, so that it was not till April, 1863, that they arrived at Genda, which was the headquarters of the Mission to the Falashas.

The King was at that time at Godjam. He had directed, with great consideration, one of his officials to conduct the Missionaries from the borders of his dominions to the station at Genda. But this official had disobeyed his instructions. The province of Tigré was in an unsettled state, and it was with considerably difficulty, that permission could be obtained from the deputy-governor to pass through that part of the country. Although the approach to Abyssinia was made under more favourable conditions than at the time of Mr. Stern's first visit, two wearisome months were spent, owing to the hindrances placed in their way, ere he and his companions arrived at Genda.

The personal intercourse of our Missionary with the Christian Falashas, confirmed the expectations which he had expressed during his first visit, and the hopes which subsequent information had inspired. He found a band of pious proselytes, professing their faith in the Redeemer, studying with assiduity the Holy Scriptures, and holding forth the Word of Life to others. Their influence extended beyond their own community, to the members of the Abyssinian Church, whom they often courteously invited to discuss certain articles of faith, and to examine the practices of the Amharas, which were at variance with the teaching of God's Word.



The *Aliga*, or Archdeacon of the Church at Genda, when invited to do this, had sent the following rejoinder, which was in itself a testimony to his own uprightness, and his confidence in the principles of the Falasha converts :—" I will not argue nor dispute with you, on matters of our respective creeds ; I know that you are right, and we are wrong ; that you adhere to the dictates of the Gospel, and we to the customs of our fathers."

Mr. Stern having examined many of these proselytes, and being assured that they were sufficiently competent to undertake evangelistic work, employed four of them to go into remote districts, which were not accessible to the regular agents of the Society ; and arranging that they should return at certain intervals, to give an account of their work, and to receive any further instructions they might personally need. The sum of five pounds annually was allotted to each labourer. This small sum was considered sufficient, as a remuneration for all the duties they were required to perform.

The arrangement and extension of the means of educating the people, was one of the most important subjects which occupied Mr. Stern's attention. Some teachers had already been trained by Mr. Flad, and fifty pounds per annum was considered to be sufficient for the preparation of twenty persons for this purpose. The common people were almost entirely ignorant of even the alphabet of their own language, and old and young thirsted for the means by which they might be able to study the Scriptures. Beyond this attainment, and the ability to write as well as read, it was not the desire, or the intention of the Missionaries that the work of education should proceed. In his letter giving details of these arrangements, Mr. Stern said :—

"The question will naturally suggest itself,—Is the field, thus accessible to the spiritual husbandman, numerically large enough to warrant an expenditure of life, time, money, and energies, in its cultivation ? To this query I give an unqualified affirmative. Compared with Poland, Germany, or even European Turkey, the Jewish population in Abyssinia is small, and very much dispersed ; yet no apprehensions need to be entertained that we are toiling for an insignificant and languishing remnant of an exiled race. According to the estimate I carefully formed on my first visit, I came to the conclusion, that the Jews scattered over the Alpine regions of Africa,

exceeded six times the sum total of that people in the United Kingdom of Great Britain; but Mr. Flad, who, with the assistance of natives, has endeavoured to gain the most reliable statistics, estimates the number much higher. The provinces in which they reside are Tigré, Woggera, Armatgioho, Walkeih, Tschelga, Dembea, and Buara. In this latter province, the vernacular tongue is that spoken by the Falashas,—one of the most striking proofs that they constitute a numerous and influential body. Our own labours have till now been almost exclusively confined to Dembea and a part of Tschelga; but even on this limited territory, I have been assured, that there are more than fifty thousand Falashas. Thus this field, whether we consider the multitude of souls entrusted to our care, or the willing disposition of the people to listen to what we have to say, constitutes a scene of intense and unabating interest. Difficulties and troubles may be looming in the horizon of our missionary sphere; the slumbering demon of intolerance may be roused to exert his baneful power; a fiery furnace of persecution may test the faith of our converts; still, if we persevere in prayer and unfeigned trust in the promises of our God, I believe that not only the Falashas, but the Abyssinian Church itself, and millions of degraded Pagan Gallas, will yet ascribe their enfranchisement from error, corruption, and idolatry, to the operations and influence of our mission."

All was sunshine at that time, and yet Mr. Stern, with prophetic eye, contemplated the possibility of approaching woe. How well he knew from experience, as well as from the testimony of God's Word, that after intervals of rest, the Church had oftentimes seasons of bitter persecution! God's faithful servant was ever ready with the Master's message, and his fellow-travellers heard from his lips, as occasion permitted, the truths which he so valued and loved. The following incident of travel is an illustration of some of the happy effects resulting from the seed which he sowed by the wayside:—

"A Spanish rabbi from Jerusalem, who during several years had frequent intercourse with our missionaries, resolved to augment his fortune by opening a trade with Abyssinia. His commercial speculations, which I do not think will realize the hopes he cherishes, brought him to Massowah, a few days after our arrival. During our detention there, he very often visited me, and our conversation, though not always on religious topics, had invariably a serious tendency. We quitted that place some days before he was able to leave. On the road we met again, and then travelled in company. His thorough knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, and his love of the Talmud, afforded us matter to beguile many a wearisome hour. The doctrines of the New Testament, and their adaptation to the

wants of the human heart, which I brought into comparison with the trivial and profitless teaching of the Rabbis, awakened, unknown to me, serious reflections in his mind, and whenever we halted, my Hebrew Bible was in his hand. On approaching Gondar, he repeatedly expressed his regret that we should be obliged to part; and that perhaps for a long time to come he would meet with no one able to speak to him on those momentous subjects, which had afforded him such delight and happiness. I pointed him to the sacred volume, and told him that it was the only guide to open the door of hope and life to the serious inquirer after truth. In the Capital, where each one had to attend to his own business, our intercourse was interrupted. One morning, the Chacham came abruptly into my room, and in accents of the most fervent entreaty solicited me to baptize him. I refused to yield to this request, and advised him to postpone the rite of baptism till he returned to Egypt or Syria. Unrepelled by my reply, he again and again begged me not to deny him a favour which would silence the cravings of his soul, and constitute him a member of Christ's Church. As I was then about to start for Genda, I asked him to accompany me, and there, after some days' regular instruction, I administered to him in the presence of all the members of our mission, the sacrament of baptism. Yesterday he left for the royal camp, and unless he is detained there, we shall probably never meet again, except it be in spirit, around the throne of grace."

The former friend and well-wisher of Mr. Stern, the Aboona Salama, was far away in the neighbourhood of Magdala. The governors of his extensive possessions in Tigré had given him a very hospitable reception, and the Aboona Joseph, of whose feelings Mr. Stern had not formerly entertained a very favourable impression, had been equally kind. These evidences of the pleasant reminiscences which the ecclesiastics had of his former visit, encouraged the assurance of their protection and sympathy, in the work in which he was engaged. He offered, if necessary, to proceed to Magdala, in order to pay his respects to the Metropolitan. Ere long, that tedious and irksome journey was to be accomplished by him, not as a free agent, but as a prisoner in chains.

Mr. Stern soon discovered that the country was almost in a state of revolution. The early promise of an equitable and enlightened rule had not been fulfilled by Theodorus. His fiery ambition had been in former times kept in subjection by some degree of reverence for the Word of God, and some religious scruples. Then his army regarded him as a superior being; he was the idol of his sub-

jects, and all rendered to him a loyal obedience. But the successes which had stimulated his valour, had also encouraged inordinate ambition. His blind passions had become uncontrollable from the effects of intemperance; and conspiracies and discontent, had excited him to a state bordering on frenzy. In his despatch from Genda, Mr. Stern spoke of these things as fraught with danger, and as indicative that the country was in a very critical state. But the King had never failed to exhibit a friendly attitude towards the Mission, and the fervent prayer of the Missionaries was, that he might return to the paths from which he had so grievously strayed, and that peace and contentment might be restored to the land. Mr. Stern, however, little conceived to what an extent the silence of the British Government, and the indifference to his request, were rankling in the heart of the Monarch, and aggravating the irritation under which he laboured, at the domestic troubles which beset his daily path.

Communications had been taking place between the French Government and Theodorus. Presents had been sent by M. Lejean, the representative of the Emperor Napoleon, who reached Abyssinia a few months after the arrival of Consul Cameron. The attention which Theodorus received was an additional stimulus to his vanity and pride. The Ambassador of France was treated with much indignity, and his request to return to his native country had not only been peremptorily denied, but manacles had been placed on him when this request was repeated. Yet at this juncture the Missionaries continued to be unmolested in their work at Genda. The machinery was being carefully organized. The Mission Schools were formed and Scripture-readers engaged. They had begun to itinerate in the provinces; and in order to provide them with necessary materials, tracts were written in preparation for printing, and the translation of books commenced. Mr. Stern had an interview with the King at Dembea. The hands of two of his loitering soldiers had just been cut off, and the giraffe inflicted on one of his most faithful supporters, the Governor of the province. Nevertheless, he preserved a courteous demeanour towards the Missionary; and on being asked whether he might visit the lowland province of Armatgioho, the King

politely replied, "You can go where you like, and if you want grain, money, or anything else, let me know, and you shall be supplied." No language could more clearly indicate, that, as far as Mr. Stern was concerned, the attitude of the King continued to be friendly, and that, if other circumstances had been equally favourable, no breach of that friendship would have occurred.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE TIME OF TRIBULATION.

It was in June, 1863, that Consul Cameron returned from the coast of the Red Sea to Abyssinia. Well would it have been for himself, and for the other Europeans, if at that time, at least, he had remained at Massowah. But it was in the prosecution of his official duties that he had come to Gondar, without any reason for believing that the King was agitated beyond precedent, on the question of the proposed Embassy to England. On being informed that the Consul had returned without any reply to the letter which he had addressed to the Queen of England, notwithstanding the effort to conceal the wound which his pride had sustained, he manifested great indignation. In his interviews with Consul Cameron, at which some, if not all the Missionaries were generally present, he betrayed an asperity and bitterness which the most careless observer could perceive.

Consul Cameron resided in one of the buildings which formed the Mission premises at Genda. This was found to be productive of serious consequences to the Mission, and those who were conducting it, and drew from the royal household an amount of observation and unfavourable criticism to which they had not been accustomed. The buildings consisted of seven thatched conical huts, including one which was used as a chapel, and another which was used as a school-house. But these were now considered to be too numerous, and everything which took place there excited displeasure. The Aboona had his spies about the Royal Court, and on July 3rd, 1863, admonished Mr. Stern, not to divulge to the King the number of

proselytes and catechumens who had been gathered in from among the Falashas. These warnings fell on the ear of the Missionary as the death-knell of the Mission. But it did not deter him from the path of duty. "My only object now was to improve the brief period during which we were still tolerated, in disseminating over the troubled land those heaven-born truths which, even in the absence of the living teacher, if blessed from on High, could make those mountains and valleys redolent with a fragrance, far more sweet than that of its scented shrubs and aromatic herbs. That such a period was approaching, unmistakable signs palpably indicated. A power invisible had touched the hearts of many, and awakened a responsive chord. There was now seen, what was never witnessed before, a thirst for the Divine Word, a yearning for Christian instruction, and an honest, confiding trust in the foreign teacher. I had wandered over many a tract, district, and province, where the voice of the messenger of glad tidings had never fallen on anxious, listening ears; but wherever I roamed and wherever I strayed—on the verdant plain, and on the picturesque mountain slope; in the sequestered wood, and beneath the isolated shady tree—every spot became a centre of attraction, and every retreat a temple for converse and communion with troubled, agitated, and alarmed truth-seeking fellow-men. The day of salvation had indeed dawned, the shadows of unregeneracy had indeed fled, and the morning of joy and praise was about to break over this region of sin, and this home of spiritual night, when events fraught with anguish, affliction, and despair, marred our hopes, and disappointed our most hallowed anticipations."

Towards the end of September, Mr. Stern returned to Genda from a missionary tour, which he had been making in the north-western lowland provinces. His heart overflowed with thankfulness to God, at the evidences of good which he had witnessed, in his intercourse with the Falashas in those districts.

"On my arrival, Mrs. Flad told me that she was glad that I had come back in the very nick of time, as on that very day she had received a letter from her husband at Gondar, requesting me in the name of the King to repair thither, as his Majesty wanted to communicate to all the Europeans the answer M. Bardel had brought to the letter he had despatched by him to the Emperor Napoleon.

Captain Cameron received a summons of similar import from the King himself. We immediately made our few necessary preparations, and the following day set out for the capital. The feast of St. John, which was then solemnized, imparted a festive aspect to the camp and city. Eating and drinking, singing and dancing, resounded from hut and tent, palace and church. All were plunged in merriment and gaiety. The myriads of beeves plundered from the Zeelans, and liberally distributed among the hungry boundo-loving gourmands, amazingly enhanced the savage carnival. We had now approached within a respectful distance of the imperial palace, where etiquette warned us to leave our saddles. Hosts of greasy terpsichorean performers met us at every nook and corner of the labyrinthine Etcheque Beit, where the royal domicile stands out in bold and picturesque relief, from the midst of a mass of indescribable rickety tenements. Careless of the sweltering fetid throng, we steered, like a ship with sails all spread, through the stormy and boisterous living ocean, up to the precincts of the Royal Court, in the hope of meeting a sober courtier who would inform his Majesty of our advent. The bacchanalian votaries were all, however, too much absorbed in their peculiar merriments to pay any attention to two white strangers; and, as we were too fond of pure air, we tacked our course out of the stifling atmosphere towards the dwelling of a debterah, where we knew a friendly welcome awaited us. On our way we encountered M. Bardel. He did not see me, and this perhaps removed all restraint from his tongue. During the short converse with Consul Cameron, the words, 'I shall crush them all'—which might have had reference to the missionaries, workmen, or French Consul—fell with appalling import on my startled ear.

"Sunday was undisturbed, but early on Monday morning we were ordered to repair to the royal residence. Of course we instantly obeyed the summons, and hurried to the palace. Two gorgeous tents, which stood conspicuously on the greasy lawn fronting the royal saloon, indicated that some business of importance was about to be transacted. In one of these gaudy pavilions was M. Lejean, the French Consul, and in the second, to which we were directed, were already assembled in barbarous state uniform his Majesty's white workmen. A few minutes had only elapsed, when half-a-dozen officers of the palace made their appearance, and requested us to follow. An ascent of about fifty broad steps landed us on the vestibule. Here another cluster of officials conducted us into the audience hall, which was still redolent with the odours of the previous day's raw beef banquet. His Majesty was seated in the deep recess of a glassless window, surrounded by books and papers, which merged the savage African into the polite and polished Ethiopian. He was more than usually dignified and polite in his deportment, though it was evident that, beneath that assumed blandness and forced condescension, there lay an under-

current of anger and asperity which his best acting—and he was a consummate actor—could with difficulty conceal. All being seated on the carpets which, in a crescent form, were spread a few yards from the Negroes, M. Bardel, the Royal Envoy, received an intimation to rise. The favoured courtier in a trice was on his legs, and like a man who knew what was expected from him, stood with an air of confidence awaiting his master's commands. 'Aito Bardel'—in subdued accents the King then said: 'how were you received by the Emperor?' 'Your Majesty,' the crafty Envoy rejoined, 'I met with a most uncourteous reception at the court of France.' 'Did they provide you?'—returned the King, 'with a house, food, and all that you required?' 'No, Janehoi,' was the response, 'I got neither a house to dwell in, nor food, nor money to supply my daily wants.' 'What did the Emperor tell you,' continued the King in the same smooth tone, 'when you presented him my letter?' 'His Imperial Majesty asked me a variety of questions about Abyssinia,' quoth the envoy, 'and he seemed favourably disposed to my proposals, when he turned to his adviser, M. d'Abbadie, who was in the reception hall, and consulted him about the matter embodied in your Majesty's despatch. M. d'Abbadie's observations immediately produced a change in the Emperor's conduct towards me, and he dismissed me with the sarcastic sentence, 'I will have no direct intercourse with a sovereign who cuts off the hands and feet of his subjects.' That this whole interview was a fiction of M. Bardel's own inventive genius was palpable, but I could not venture to express such a conjecture, without endangering my life, to any one except Consul Cameron. The Emperor, though unwilling to have any direct intercourse with the court of Abyssinia, the envoy further stated, was not desirous to terminate all future relation with Ethiopia, and this induced him to order his minister to write an answer to the document he had conveyed to France. This letter, which was most courteous, and replete with wise and sensible suggestions, was now handed for perusal to the assembled conclave. Consul Cameron was ordered to read it aloud, for the edification of all. When this was done, his Majesty seized the document, and dashing it on the ground, remarked in accents of bitter irony, blended with wounded pride, 'Is this an answer to my letter? Napoleon may think himself great, but I am greater still; his genealogy is only of yesterday; mine, on the contrary, I trace back to David and Solomon. True he is rich, and I am poor; he is powerful, and I am weak; he has fine palaces, and I only ruins; but'—and he paused a few seconds, whilst his hypocritical eyes were devoutly upturned—'glory, wealth, and renown will yet be my portion!' A few unimportant questions were now interchanged between the Negroes and the disgraced French representative. M. Lejean tried and tried hard to convince his Majesty, through the delegates (for a personal interview, though urgently solicited, was not granted), that he laboured under an erroneous impression, and misunderstood the

sentiments of his master the Emperor, who cherished the highest regard and esteem for the King. To corroborate his statement, he most assiduously craved permission to present to the Negoos, the despatches he had received from his government, which positively stated that the Abyssinian embassy would be accepted, so soon as the arrangements for their passage through Egypt had been satisfactorily settled. Neither diplomacy nor persuasion could, however, appease the incensed monarch; and M. Lejean and his companion, Dr. Legard, instead of chains, with which they were to have been favoured, had not the Aboona interfered, received peremptory orders to quit the country. The departure of the French Consul; the doubts and suspicions about an answer to his letter from the British Government; the report that a strong Turkish force had taken their position at Matamma, on the north-western border; the consciousness that he could not cope with a foe whom he had insolently challenged to a combat, together with the fading vision of ever obtaining by diplomacy the coveted possession of Senaar to the north-west, and the isle of Massowah to the north-east, soured his temper, and stimulated him to perpetrate deeds which led to the ruin of his country, and the loss of his crown and life. Ominous indications of coming events henceforth cast their dismal shadows athwart our serene and hitherto unclouded horizon. No one, of course, had the remotest idea in what shape or form the impending crisis would develop itself. I believed the royal indignation would burst on the missionaries, in an order for their immediate expulsion, and on the British Consul, in a mandate for a forcible unfettered detention. I communicated the fears I felt to Captain Cameron, but he did not share the dismal forebodings in which I indulged.

“The object of my mission was by this time completely attained, and, to avoid all unnecessary delays, which might perhaps have retarded my return, I mounted my mule, and bade farewell to scenes and associations that, I still faintly trusted, would prove centres of light and truth, to irradiate far and wide the thick darkness of Abyssinia’s superstitious gloom.”

Some repetition will necessarily occur in this important narrative. There are prominent features which need to be reiterated, inasmuch as they have been made the theme of much controversy and misrepresentation. The following extract summarizes some points which are essential to the narration:—

“Consul Cameron, whose name is mixed up with all the troubles which subsequently befell the small band of captives, reached the court of Theodorus in 1863. The reception accorded to him was most flattering. His Majesty till then had some suspicion that the British Government had not quite exonerated him from all blame in the murder of Consul Plowden. The arrival of a new representa-



tive, and the letters and presents he brought—particularly a gun from Her Majesty, with a neat inscription, acknowledging the kindness he had evinced to her late servant—removed this false impression. The Consul, whilst in the camp, was the royal guest, and was treated with marked respect and courtesy. The advantages of diplomatic intercourse with some of the great powers of Europe, which the King had been contemplating for some time, were now about to be realized. With this object in view, an official note was immediately indited; one copy was entrusted to the British Consul for his Government, and another to M. Bardel, a Frenchman, for the Emperor Napoleon. His aim in seeking to cultivate the friendship of two great countries like England and France, was not unworthy of the character of the man.

“‘We are blind,’ he told me on several occasions, ‘and I wish to cultivate the friendship of enlightened nations, in order that they may aid me to educate my own people.’ Of course, in his mind, education was to a very great extent associated with the manufacture of powder, the casting of cannons, and the making of roads; all other branches of knowledge he regarded as insignificant, or subordinate to these requirements. To his vexation and disappointment, England did not reply to his despatch, and France only met his advances with suggestions and counsels he did not relish. Consul Cameron, fully persuaded that his Government would receive the embassy, which had been accepted several years before, sent special messengers to Aden to insure the safety of the royal letter, whilst he himself, during the interval, made a tour round the north-eastern and north-western frontier, and then returned to Abyssinia in June, 1863, and took up his abode on our mission premises.”

We pause on the threshold of one of those events in the history of the suffering people of God, which can only call forth the exclamation, “Righteous art Thou, O Lord!” How, and why the Lord thus works, and the wisdom of the process by which His people are exposed to the deepest tribulation, is a mystery of which we have but the imperfect outline. “Be still and know that I am God.” It has often been the will of God that His most distinguished servants should realize experimentally the sufferings of their crucified Lord, and should be baptized with the baptism of agony wherewith He was baptized.

“It was on the memorable October 13, 1863, that I entered on my disastrous and fatal journey. The sun on that ill-omened day rose in its wonted tropical splendour; hills and valleys, fields and meadows, all sparkled and glittered in the lovely splendour of a tropical morn. To the north rose, in bold relief against the azure sky, massive rocks, which, for many hours of the day, cast a deep shadow over the sacred quarter of Kudus Gabriel. Opposite, on a

verdant sloping ground, lay in peaceful repose the large division of the town called Etcheque Beit, intersected by churches embosomed in the shady foliage of the juniper. Beyond these, in a south-west direction, extended, as far as the eye could reach, the tents of the King's army; whilst due south and west, at the extremity of the lovely plain, lay, like a sheet of burnished gold, the isle-dotted lake of Dembea. The silence of death, broken only by the chants of the officiating priests, which, till now, fell in melancholy cadences on the ear, was gradually superseded by less harmonious strains. Bleating flocks, accompanied by the jarring notes of the shepherd's shrill reed-pipe, here scaled a steep ascent towards an upland plateau; there a peasant, cracking his terrible giraffe, lazily followed his bees to a distant field. From one house resounded the harsh voice of a virago, who poured forth volumes of unmentionable epithets on a truant daughter or indolent husband; from another were heard the oaths of a drunken soldier, who refused to pay for his libations, intermingled with the shouts and imprecations of a merchant, who would not yield his property to the spoiler. This din and confusion, as if not enough to stun the ear, was now and then heightened by the sharp rattle of a rusty musket, which, as it floated across the plain, gathered strength in the distant rocks, where it reverberated for miles with a deep crawling echo, or by a savage war-whoop, that reminded one forcibly of a large travelling menagerie. In my own domicile all was in harmony with its sedate occupant. Servants and slaves noiselessly performed their various duties; even the beggars, who beleaguered the doorway, in subdued accents solicited their alms, quite contrary to their wonted boisterous clamour. My mind, excited by the anticipation of the journey, the fears and doubts of its successful termination, and a variety of distracting reveries—the prelude of coming troubles—forbade repose, and I rose exhausted and feverish. The bustle of packing, the hurrying to and fro of domestics, and the excitement of leave-taking, relieved my spirit, and banished those dismal visions which, in defiance of all resistance, presented themselves to my imagination. My host, the Aboona, in the retirement and sanctity of an inner court, which it was sacrilegious to cross without previous sanction, promised me, on the preceding evening, an early interview; but, forgetful of his engagement, and wrapt in sweet daylight slumber, he tested my patience not a little by his unreasonable hours. Unwilling to delay longer, I had the temerity to penetrate his sanctum. On seeing me he stretched out his hand, and observed, 'I am later than usual; but this,' he added, smilingly, 'must be attributed to the holy Georgis, who, like myself, does not want you to desecrate the day, devoted to him, by travelling.' I expressed a different opinion, but he ridiculed my secret surmises. I then discussed again various unimportant matters, partook of a substantial breakfast, arranged some business affairs, and then, followed by his own and Father Joseph's (his confessor's) best wishes, took my

departure out of the hospitable episcopal residence. My animals being loaded and already on the march, I at once mounted my mule, and, accompanied by my Armenian servant and some natives, rode up to the Etcheque Beit, to bid farewell to Consul Cameron. He had already anticipated this parting visit, for his mule stood saddled in the court. To avoid the noonday's sun, we bestrode our animals, and, trotting through rugged narrow lanes and over hills impregnated with all sorts of unmentionable odours, hurried on towards the foaming and dashing Gaha. Bardel joined us near the river, and he and the Consul, with their numerous followers, formed quite a respectable cavalcade. As the King was on the march, masses of soldiers, with their ragged followers, were in a confused medley, forcing their course in the same direction, in order to join their respective Chiefs. The panting and gasping, hungry and tattered multitude, formed a host whose very appearance augured desolation and misery to any province they might have to traverse. To us they were tolerably civil, though, as I afterwards recollected, there was not that deference which had hitherto been evinced towards the white man. Had I been less engaged with my own thoughts and more with the rabble host, I might have divined, from the coarse jests and gibes, the rude gaze, and impertinent appearance of the semi-savages between whom we defiled, that the white man had sunk in position, and that there were already indistinct murmurs which prognosticated his impending doom.

"Some servants of Consul Cameron and Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis, who, with despatches and letters for the coast, had, on the previous day, by order of the King, been plundered and maltreated, confirmed my suspicions. Al Tassab, one of the party, and who was delighted to find a refuge among my people, lost twelve dollars, all his earthly possessions. The packets were conveyed to Gondar, and there Samuel, as I heard from his own lips, concealed, but did not destroy them. His sole object was to keep on good terms with the favourite Chrishona artizans, and their missionary brethren, Staiger and Brandeis, till he had wreaked his vengeance on Consul Cameron, and those whom, like myself, he considered more directly connected with England.

"Two hours' ride was beguiled by pleasant converse about the future destiny of the country, of whose beauties and capabilities we could judge by the surrounding scenery; and then we bade each other a cordial farewell. Followed by my Armenian servant, I sped my way through the ever-increasing crowd, up a regular succession of steep, and about mid-day landed on the verdant plateau of Woggera. Here, to my disagreeable surprise, I saw, about ten minutes' ride to the left, the camp of the King. Immediately I consulted with my people, who had been waiting for me, whether we should encamp. They unanimously declared that it was my duty to halt, until I had paid my respects to the King. I did not particularly

admire this advice, but as a deviation from the established etiquette might have been misinterpreted into rudeness or contempt, I accepted with the best grace a not very pleasant suggestion.

"A fair, green spot, abounding with fragrant herbs and shady trees, invited us to alight. The royal camp, though near, was not near enough to attract the inquisitive and curious, the lazy beggar and the proud military chief, to our halting-place. My tent was soon erected, and on a bed of sweet herbs I enjoyed a happy and calm repose, after the fatigue and toils of the journey.

"The idea of visiting the white tent of royalty, which shone brightly in the clear atmosphere, on a hill about half an hour's distance, depressed my spirits with a melancholy I could not explain. I tried to dispel this ceaseless gloom by writing and jotting down notes, but, notwithstanding my utmost effort, I found it impossible to banish the presentiment of an impending disaster. Conscious that, neither by word nor deed I had merited the King's ill will, I strove against the warning of the internal monitor, and, throwing my shama around me, like a man anxious to get over an unpleasant task, I went, accompanied by two of my people, towards the hill, on whose summit stood conspicuously the imperial pavilion. As I approached, all previous surmises and misgivings vanished; and, confiding in the consciousness of my integrity, which I thought would be a shield strong enough to guard me against the machinations and malice of insidious foes, if I had any, I boldly advanced till I stood within a respectful and becoming distance of the never-to-be-forgotten spot.

"Whilst waiting for the approach of an officer or domestic of the royal household, who would announce my visit, groups of drunken military chiefs and district governors came staggering, in most unseemly attitudes, out of the royal banqueting tent. Many gazed at me in stupid bewilderment; others, with heavy tongues, bawled forth a compliment or abuse on the white men, who had brought into disrepute the faithful lance and trusty sword, by the introduction of heavy muskets and unwieldy cannons. I felt disposed to retreat, but to this, for sapient reasons, my companions justly objected. I then suggested that we should seek the shelter of a shady tree or bush, till the banquet was over and his Majesty visible. This proposal was equally rejected as incompatible with Abyssinian rule. The last jar of hydromel had at length, as a royal page, *en passant*, assured me, been quaffed; the last reeking joint had been devoured; the last batch of rioters had disappeared, when the folds of the tent were thrown aside, and his Majesty, surrounded by half-a-dozen officers and several pages, strutted out into the open air. My companions quickly prostrated themselves into the dust; whilst I, without imitating their servile obeisance, made a humble and deferential bow. 'Come nearer!' shouted the attendants. I obeyed, and advanced a few steps. 'Still nearer!' reiterated several stentorian voices. I complied, and made another for-



ward movement. 'What do you want?' sharply demanded the flushed and drink-excited Negroes. 'I saw your Majesty's tent,' was the response, 'and came hither to offer my humble salutations and respects to your Majesty.' 'Where are you going?' 'I am, with your Majesty's sanction, about to proceed to Massowah.' 'And why did you come to Abyssinia?' 'A desire to circulate the Word of God among your Majesty's subjects prompted the enterprise,' I rejoined. 'Can you make cannons?' 'No,' was the reply. 'You lie,' was the laconic retort; and then, turning with a withering glance towards Negusee, one of my companions—a servant of Consul Cameron, he imperatively demanded to know the name of his province. 'I am from Tigré,' tremulously responded the poor man. 'And you are the servant or interpreter of this white man?' 'No, your Majesty, I am in the employ of Consul Cameron, and only accompany him down to Adowa, whither I am bound to see my family.' 'You vile carcass! you base dog! you rotten donkey! you dare to bandy words with your King. Down with the villain, and *bemouti* (by my death), beat him till there is not a breath in his worthless carcass.' The order was promptly obeyed, and the poor, inoffensive man, without a struggle, ejaculation, or groan, was dashed on the ground, where, amidst the shouts of the savage Monarch, that the executioners should vigorously ply their sticks, the animated and robust frame was, in less than a minute, a torn and mangled corpse. 'There's another man yonder,' vociferated the savage King, 'kill him also.' The poor fellow, who stood at a considerable distance, was immediately dragged to the side of his motionless companion, and, without having breathed a word or syllable that could possibly have irritated the sanguinary tyrant, doomed to share the same unhappy fate. I was amazed, bewildered, and surprised. In my agitation I might, unconsciously, have put my hand or finger to my lips. This the cruel tyrant construed into an act of defiance, and, without one warning or reproof, he rushed upon me with a drawn pistol, like a lion balked of his prey. For an instant I saw the glittering weapon sparkling in the rays of the sinking sun, and then, as if checked in his fell design by an invisible power, it disappeared again into the case suspended round his waist. 'Knock him down! brain him! kill him!' were the words which rung appallingly on my ear. In the twinkling of an eye I was stripped, on the ground, and insensible. Stunned, unconscious, and almost lifeless, with the blood oozing out of scores of gashes, I was dragged into the camp, not, as my guards were commanded, to bind me in fetters, but, as they thought—and I heard it from their own lips—to bury me.

"A stifling sensation, I well remember, roused me to something approaching consciousness. I tried to speak, but my throat and mouth, full of clotted blood, forbade the attempt. I sought to look around me, but my eyes were glued, and I did not dare to open them. I endeavoured to recollect the events of the last few hours,



but my swimming and giddy head rendered the effort abortive. Rousing myself from this state of painful lassitude and stupefaction, my mind, though sadly confused, retained some faint recollection of the last hour's terrible scene. The soldier to whom I was fastened, and whose shama my bleeding wounds had thoroughly saturated, noticed that I was in great agony and distress. The gentle touch with which he lifted the chain convinced me that he was not one of Theodorus' hardened ruffians. 'What do you want?' he kindly inquired. I pointed to my parched and feverish lips. 'Woha' (water). 'Tenisu (get up), and you shall have some.' With difficulty I raised my cold, shivering, and stiff limbs, and, together with my kind guardian, crept to a watch-fire, where there was a party who had a skin full of water. 'Hit (go), Turk,' they shouted, 'for our Christian cups shall not touch a Moslem's lips.' 'I am not a Mahommedan,' I mournfully sighed, 'but a Christian, and a believer in the blessed Trinity.' These faintly-breathed words acted like a galvanic battery on their insensible hearts. Promptly the water cup was raised to my quivering lips, and a place vacated for me near the fire. A good, cold draught roused me to a knowledge of my misery and wretchedness, loneliness and desolation. I was alone; a stranger in a strange country. No bosom was open to my sorrow, no heart shared my grief. The world around me was dead to a white man's anguish, and indifferent to his woes; but though far removed from the sight of those whose words might have soothed the aching, lacerated, and bleeding missionary; whose hands might have bathed his throbbing temples, stanchd his bleeding wounds, and protected him from the chill morning blast, there was One present, who, in the utter despondency and despair of the storm-tossed heart, could point to His own solemn and touching words: 'Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'

"The long, interminable night of suffering and trial, with its dew and cold and darkness, at length drew to a close, and the dawn revealed, in its dim, pale light, the mountain-tops that guarded, like impregnable ramparts, the south-eastern confines of the wide-spreading Woggera plain. Twilight in those latitudes speedily yields to the full blaze of sunlight, and cold night to the warmth, if not heat, of day. The camp was now full of life, activity, and bustle. Tents were struck, mules loaded, and horses saddled. Women and men, chiefs in silken shirts, and common soldiers in greasy shamas, vied with each other in clearing the camp and road before the approach of the royal cavalcade. In the midst of that hum and din, I alone was most indifferent and unconcerned. Many of my wounds had, indeed, ceased to bleed, but that did not mitigate my excruciating suffering. During the cold and damp of night the inflammation, if not subdued, was at least checked; but the wind and sun, acting on the unswathed and exposed gashes, pro-

duced the most exquisite and indescribable torture. Death, the dreaded intruder on many a happy home, would then to me have been an angel of mercy; but though I yearned most impatiently for his visit, he would not come. The fetters fastened around my native companion's wrist were unriveted, and my swollen, palsied arms, instead of being held in irons, were pitilessly grasped by two savage ruffians, in the service of a notorious villain, Ali Woobeshat, the Governor of Woggera. Excited to a pitch almost verging on frenzy, I tried to shake off the dastardly poltroons, but the exertion exceeded my energy, and I shrank prostrate at their feet. Forced to get up, I was partly carried and partly dragged out of the detested camp. The physical effort was too much for my failing strength, so that, despite the goading of the zealous myrmidons of Ali Woobeshat, I had to rest again and again. Water! water! was my entreaty. This mournful cry, several parties of soldiers who passed by heard; but, although they cast many a pitiful glance on the disfigured and woe-begone stranger, not one had compassion enough to allay the maddening thirst of my burning tongue. At last I saw a Chief, a native of Genda, strutting along, who had formerly been in Egypt on an errand of his royal master, where, as I heard from his own lips, he had been most hospitably entertained. That man, I felt persuaded, would act the part of the good Samaritan, and relieve my distress. He halted, looked at me, listened to my pathetic appeal; and, with the withering scowl of a demon on his lean, ugly face, rode quietly away. Ah! tell me not that there is a hidden fount of kindness in every heart, which needs only to be touched, and it will gush forth in streams of love, tenderness, and mercy! This may be the case—nay, I believe it is the case, in countries where, as in happy England, the Gospel has refined the asperities of a selfish nature; but such was not my experience in Abyssinia, and in the camp of the crime-stained Theodorus. Pushed on by the cowardly savages, who imagined that a man who could not stand might yet be able to run, I crawled forward, and at length, to the satisfaction of the custodians, was safely housed in a peasant's reed-built cabin. Two Chiefs, Hassan Ali, the nominal governor of Yedshou, and Basha Medeka, a noble of Woggera, who had the previous evening broken their sticks on my head, received me. Whether my wretched and almost dying condition moved their pity, or whether they thought that my decease might draw upon them the wrath of their master, I cannot positively assert. I know that they were attentive to my wants, and, together with the villagers, did everything in their power to mitigate my sufferings. Hassan Ali, an amateur dabbler in the surgical art, kindly examined the depth of my wounds. The operation, though well intended, was very painful, for the instrument—a hard stalk of straw—was not the best probe for a white man's skull. The swarthy amateur doctor was evidently displeased with his patient's condition, and, to convince himself thoroughly of the state of my cranium, he

ordered me to press firmly a piece of cane which he had put between my teeth. I tried to obey, but the swollen and aching gums refused to perform the imposed task. By dint of perseverance I at last succeeded. The kind physician watched the operation with intense interest, and then, like a wise man, without expressing his opinion, probably not to compromise his reputation, he gave a sapient shake to his butter-besmeared wig, and squatted down.

“It was now about eight o’clock, and as I had not yet heard or seen anything of my servants, I began to be suspicious about their safety. My guards kindly assured me that nothing had happened to them, and that in a short time they would be conducted to my abode. This, for the nonce, proved true, for before noon they all made their appearance. The sight of their disfigured, prostrated, and wounded master, who only a short time before had left them cheerful, strong, and happy, arrested their breath, and, in rapt speechlessness, they stood gazing at me. Their pent-up grief gathered strength during this brief silent interval, and then gushed forth a flood of tears and convulsive sighs so genuine, honest, and touching, as to awaken a responsive sympathetic chord in the bosom of the groups of villagers who had collected around my desolate couch.

“Past noon, there arrived from the infamous governor, Ali Woobeshat, a pair of hand and foot chains, which, at the command of royalty, were to be fastened around my swollen limbs. The guards, hardened as they were to every better sentiment, I could perceive from their looks, did not quite approve this fresh infliction of suffering on a dying man. There were many whispers, consultations, and animated debates; but, as I anticipated, it all ended in a unanimous decision that the royal mandate must be obeyed. My poor servant Joseph, a native of Aleppo, on perceiving that his master’s lacerated, torn, and bleeding limbs were to be manacled, threw himself before the guards, and, in melting accents, implored that they should not perpetrate such a ruthless deed on a stranger and a Christian. I believe they would gladly have acceded to his prayer, had not the image of their terrible master floated, like a dreaded phantom, before their frightened imagination, and steeled them against another’s woes. They still hesitated a little, and not till I told them to do whatever they felt disposed, did they proceed to perform the disagreeable operation. The ring round the wrists was expeditiously hammered on; not so around the ankles. The inflammation, which had continued to increase till the leg had assumed a most formidable size, rendered it impossible to fasten the hoop so that the foot could not slip through. Baffled and perplexed, they at last resolved to fasten the right hand to the left ankle, the least injured—an operation which, I must confess, they performed with a care and tenderness that did honour to their humane feelings.

“ Utterly unconscious that I had perpetrated any offence or crime to merit this harsh treatment, I consoled myself in my terrible position with the illusive hope, that after a day or two, the tyrant would regret, or at least relax in, his unprovoked severity, and permit me to crawl on as well as I could to Massowah. I had not yet penetrated the depth of Theodorus’ malice, nor experimentally learnt, that man in barbarous, and sometimes also in civilized countries, is most vindictive towards those on whom he has inflicted the deepest wrongs.

“ The sunny visions in which my enfeebled imagination loved to indulge, alleviated my oppressive solitude ; and I sank for several hours into what I so much needed—a kind of stupid reverie. Dawn—cold and dismal dawn—had already lit up the rickety stockade walls of my prison, when, chilled by the damp winds that poured in gusts through every hole and crevice, I awoke to the fearful reality of my sad position. A few verses out of the sacred volume, adapted to my circumstances, imparted a peaceful serenity to my chafed and harassed mind. ‘Neither shall there be any more pain.’ I had read these words, pondered over them, and preached about them, but, not till that moment did I feel the energy they infuse, the consolation they afford, and the sweet resignation they communicate. Delightful thought!—no more torture to rack the frame—no more fetters to cripple the limbs—no more buffetings to mark with blood the Christian preacher’s entangled path—no more oppression and tyranny, scorn and derision, such as fell to my lot the day before—but, rest, peace, and joy in the home of our God, in the mansions of glory near the centre of creation, where tyranny cannot enter, nor cruel despotism have the sway ; where, no chastening stroke is felt, and no bitter cup is swallowed ; where, is the tree of life, beneath whose shadow we shall repose—and the fountain of life, whose water we shall drink.

“ Such were the thoughts which beguiled my mind, and dissipated the maddening gloom.”

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### AGGRAVATED SUFFERINGS. UNSUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION.

The recital of the Missionary's cruel and ignominious sufferings has been given in his own words. The barbarous despot, at whose word he had been maltreated even unto death, had not on any previous occasion exhibited anger, or upbraided him with any neglect of duty, or act of disrespect. There had been, therefore, no deed of personal hostility which might lead to events so wicked and deplorable. Up to that time, there is not a shadow of evidence of any kind, that Theodorus entertained anything but a friendly feeling towards Mr. Stern. Nor is it too much to believe, that, if his appearance in the presence of the King had not taken place, when he and his dissipated Chiefs were intoxicated from the effects of their long continued libations, such a catastrophe would not have occurred. How far those who urged him, contrary to his own inclinations, to present himself to the King at that moment, were influenced by unworthy motives, does not appear. He was, however, afterwards told by Hassan Ali, that had he not called, orders had been given to arrest him, and that in such a case the penalty might have been more terrible than the infliction of the stick. Every circumstance seemed to combine, in aggravating the distress and suffering which crushed his body and lacerated his soul. Theodorus himself, as if deeply conscious that he had been guilty of an unpardonable and wholly unjustifiable offence, took every measure by which he might be apparently justified; and heaped every possible indignity upon his captive, as if he had been the worst of criminals.



The morning after this outrage, a company of horsemen appeared to conduct Mr. Stern to the presence of the King. Some of the guards seemed to be moved by the sight of his bruised and bleeding body, and whispered that the King would show him mercy. They then hinted, that which subsequently proved to be a fact, that his intimacy with the Aboona was one of the chief causes of his trouble, for that an unfriendly feeling had sprung up between the Metropolitan and the King.

The mournful cavalcade reached Gondar, where Theodorus had pitched his tents. As soon as it arrived, the guards bound a strong belt around the waist and arms of the sufferer; a seeming precaution which they had omitted on the journey, but which they dared not neglect when entering the camp.

One of Mr. Stern's servants had proceeded to the Aboona's residence, and returned with notes from the Primate and from Consul Cameron, which he secreted in his clothing. These papers expressed the deepest sympathy in his sufferings, and the solemn assurance, that no effort should be spared in order to effect his liberation.

Hurried into the presence of the dreaded tyrant, the following colloquy took place:—

“ ‘Why did you come before me on the road?’ demanded his Majesty in a stern tone. ‘I came,’ was the rejoinder, ‘to offer my salutations and respects to your Majesty.’ ‘Who gave you permission,’ continued my interrogator, evidently at a loss to palliate his cruelty, ‘to take my people to your country?’ ‘Your Majesty is misinformed,’ I replied, ‘for I never intended to take a single Abyssinian to Europe. This, my servants, who are all standing here (they had all been arrested), can testify.’ ‘Why did you insult me when I punished two of my subjects, who did not conduct themselves with becoming propriety in my presence?’ ‘Your Majesty,’ I solemnly replied, ‘there is a God above, and He knows that courtesy prompted me to approach your Majesty’s tent.’ After a pause, during which he evidently tried to work himself into a rage, he abruptly and angrily said: ‘You white men hate me, and I hate you. I allow you to come and stay in my country merely because I want to get some of your *belhad* (arts). England and France boast of power and riches; I defy them both.’ Then turning to the servants, he inquired why they accompanied me. The response, as might have been expected, was, ‘because he pays us.’ ‘And where are you going?’ Several at once replied, ‘To our home at Adowa.’ ‘And cannot I pay you more, vile peasants’ sons, than that white slave?’ grunted forth the artificially excited Monarch. ‘Guards,

seize them!" Instantly they were seized, stripped and buffeted; then turning in the direction where the chiefs of my escort stood, he said: 'Watch him well, and do not allow any one without my sanction to approach him.' I was immediately in the grasp of half-a-dozen officers, who led me to the tent which had been erected for my camp prison. The small canvas shelter was already crowded by a whole host of volunteers, who, under the pretext of wishing to see their friends, had really come to have a good view of the unfortunate Cocab. Sick, feverish, and exhausted, I was not allowed to stretch my weary limbs in peace and quiet on the hard, uneven ground. I was a prisoner, but without fetters, and until these were rivetted around my swollen ankles and wrists, the gaolers could not partake of the repast provided by the royal purveyor. Manacles, with which each Chief must be provided, whether on a march or in the camp, at home or abroad, were quickly enough brought into the prison. There was, as ever, some altercation about the weight of one and the length of the other. These preliminaries were, however, amicably arranged, and the passive victim of wanton cruelty, had patiently to yield his aching limbs to the merciless infliction of a malefactor's manacles. Bread, brando, and tedj, were now in due proportion served to the faithful lieges of the great king. The smell of the reeking collops and fetid assembly did not improve my position. My eyes were swollen, my nerves unstrung, and my head was throbbing as if every pulsation would be the last; and yet the agony did not cease, nor my wretched existence terminate for ever. I moved from side to side; now my shama covered my quivering frame, then again I had madly thrust it over the soldier to whom I was tied; one moment I bit it in agony with my chattering teeth, the next I almost unconsciously applied it to a bleeding sore. I do not know how long this struggle between pain and restlessness, wakefulness and somnolency continued. A stupor akin to insensibility overwhelmed me, from which I could not rouse myself till daybreak next morning."

One day of anguish succeeded another. Reports reached the ear of the captive of the efforts being made by the Consul and others, on his behalf. It was even said that the King intended to condone the wrong he had done, by the gift of a large sum of money, and a prompt dismissal of the Missionary to his own country. "I cherished similar hopes," wrote Mr. Stern, "and in my illusion I not unfrequently worried my mind, with all sorts of conjectures about the application of the money the tyrant might give me, of which, as it was extorted from his subjects by the torturing rope and mutilating knife, I would not retain a farthing in my possession." Then a party were sent to ransack his luggage, and to seize any letters

which might be in his possession and which he might have received either from the Consul, or from the Aboona. Some days afterwards, Mr. Flad and others were instructed to visit him, and to "ask Aito Cocab (as Mr. Stern was called) why he insulted him." The delegates returned with the assurance, that any disrespect was never intended; and that if any offence had been unwittingly committed, Mr. Stern would with a stone on his neck crave the King's forgiveness. But this attempt at conciliation was in vain. As one demand was complied with, another was made; and it was soon evident that other agencies were at work, in order to foment the Monarch's indignation, and render the restoration of friendly relations impossible. The delegates "were ordered to come again the next morning, and to bring with them at the same time a letter from Consul Cameron, embodying the views and feelings entertained by the British Government towards Abyssinia and its Monarch. The Consul was immediately informed of the request of the King, with which, I believe, he promptly complied. The following morning, the small band of intercessors repaired again to the royal camp, where they expected to meet, according to previous arrangement, a messenger with Consul Cameron's despatch. Aito Samuel, in his blindest tones, welcomed the deputies; and if gracious smiles and low bows conveyed any meaning, I was a free and happy man. The affable courtier hastened to present to his Majesty the salutations of his visitors, to whom, after a brief pause, he returned with a most condescending response. 'Have you brought Consul Cameron's letter, as his Majesty requested?' now inquired the worthy mouthpiece of royalty. Almost spontaneously, every one turned round to see whether the expected messenger, with that important document, had arrived; but, alas! though they shouted, inquired, and searched, he could not be found. Angry, black, scowling, the excited courtier disappeared within the folds of the royal pavilion. Tremulously the little group awaited the issue of this exciting and shifting scene. Their patience was not long tried, for the folds of the tent were once more lifted, and Samuel, not radiant with benignity, but frowning like a fiend, stood before them, and, in an assumed tone of offended dignity, blended with the coarse bombast of low vulgarity, ordered them, in the

name of the King, to return to their homes. My expected liberation was thus postponed from day to day, and week to week. There were many natives, and some Europeans, who were anxious to have the manacles knocked off my limbs ; but they had no influence, or were too timid to put it to the test. Aboona Salama, the Metropolitan, alone, was most indefatigable in his exertions. He threatened and implored, gave rich presents, and made glowing promises ; spared neither time, letters, nor money ; in fact, he did everything in his power, and beyond his power, to move the pity of the tyrant towards the victim of his ferocity. At one time he seemed inclined to relent, and the next I was again more closely watched. Perhaps, I thought, the malicious Monarch finds a satisfaction in the agonizing suspense of his captive ; or, he seeks some plea to gloss over the infamy of his base conduct ; or, what appeared not improbable, he intends, in the dying throes of the white man, to demonstrate before obsequious serfs the greatness of his power. Such were the dismal phantoms with which my diseased imagination beguiled the present, and sought to foreshadow the future.

“A fortnight thus elapsed, a fortnight that appeared a century, for who can compute the length of those weary hours that hang immovable on the dial-plate of Time, offering neither hope to despair, rest to trouble, nor comfort to misery. At such a period—I say it solemnly—the punctured head, the riven side, the pierced feet, and the heavy cross of Redeeming Love, is a sight that nerves and supports the drooping and desponding spirit. In my distress and sorrow, I threw myself on the bosom of a sympathizing Saviour, and if I was not happy, I was at least resigned.”

Some signs of a better state of mind again began to manifest themselves. It was reported that the long-expected letter from the British Government had reached Massowah. The confiscated luggage and keys were returned to Mr. Stern, and inquiries were sent from the designing King concerning the health and circumstances of the captive. His faithful servant, Joseph, who clung to him through every adversity, had obtained permission to visit the Europeans, and returned with the joyful intelligence that he had heard in the Consul's house that a steamer had arrived at Massowah, with letters and presents for the King. However exaggerated these

impressions might have been, they yet cheered the sufferer, who was learning meekly to bear his galling fetters, and cheerfully to submit to the grievous wrongs to which he had been subject.

“I had a support in the brightening future, and a solace in the prospect of a speedy release from that wasting confinement which rendered the present so sickening. My frame, inured to fatigue, and steeled against hardships, unimpaired by potent hydromel, and still more potent arackee (alcohol), which only on special occasions, and in the presence of royalty, polluted my lips, began to recover from the shock it had experienced. The wounds and scars which only a week before, even under the most favourable changes, threatened to cost me my right hand, and perhaps my arm, began to heal, the swelling subsided, and I could, without great effort or support, stand erect. All looked serene and cheerful. That my papers and diaries, in a foreign language, containing facts, incidents, and observations on the occurrences of each passing day, which no traveller or missionary ought to entrust to memory, should ever offer a pretext for renewed severity, never for a moment presented itself to my mind. Besides this, who would suggest to the King the perusal of a stranger's letters and notes? M. Bardel, who hated missionaries, might do so; but he pretended to cherish a special regard for me; and then his apparent efforts to effect my release, strengthened the confidence I reposed in him. Aito Samuel, the ex-baldaraba of Consul Cameron, I knew, was capable of any vile action, if it tended to injure the white man, whom he hated, or enhanced the royal favour, which he laboured to secure. He had, however, been most injudiciously bribed to conceal what he ought never to have known. Had I possessed less candour and some duplicity, not a written line in my possession would ever have gratified the sight of the King or his unscrupulous minions. It is true I ought to have remembered Richelieu's aphorism: ‘Give me two lines from any man, and his head shall roll on the scaffold.’ I was deceived. Several times I intended to give a few dollars to my native companion, and, in the absence of the guard, try to destroy every scrap of paper in my possession; but then, again, it appeared to me quite a superfluous precaution, to remove notes and memoranda that were useful and intelligible to me, but almost valueless and incoherent to a stranger. My book, of which I had a copy—the only one in Abyssinia—I would never have concealed, for the history of the King's life which it embodied, I imagined, could not fail to be flattering and grateful to the despot's pride. The well-founded statement that his mother sold kosso, I felt sure the most cursory reader of the volume could perceive, was not written to depreciate, but to do justice to the humble Chieftain, who, by his own skill, dexterity, and valour, had, through the lines of hostile nobles and cringing serfs, made his way to a sceptre and throne. Such were the conjectures that sometimes flashed across my mind,



without leaving a real or abiding impression. The possibility of an interview with the King, the probability of a reconciliation, the removal from prison, the mode of travelling, and the joyous restoration to friends and home; these, and not the dismal anticipation of a protracted captivity, and more rigorous treatment, were the pictures that danced before my eyes, and exhilarated my spirits.

"It was exactly twenty-eight days after my fatal encounter with the King on the Woggera highlands, that, about noon, friend Samuel, with a flushed countenance and averted look, strutted into the prison-tent. The guards, of whom a good number were accidentally with me, as well as myself, received his most courteous salutation. I requested him to sit down, but, without heeding my invitation, he entreated, in the sweetest tone that he could adopt, that I should resign to him the keys of my luggage. 'Samuel,' I said, in a voice which neither betrayed anger nor grief—'Samuel, I know what this request signifies, only take care that you do not bring new troubles on an innocent man; for if you do I may die, and if your own acts, and those of your abettors, escape with impunity here, they will not remain unvisited hereafter.' 'Don't think ill of me, I am your friend'—and then, turning to the guards, he shouted, 'Seize this luggage, and carry it up to his Majesty!' Joseph, who sat petrified and stunned, the courtier now touched by the arm, and, in a cajoling strain, said, 'Joseph, ibn Arab, you must come with me.' The bewildered man gave him a glance that would have pierced his very soul, had it not been encased in a triple brass covering, and then, without uttering a word, obeyed mechanically the injunction, and marched off.

"Adversity had again blighted my prospects, and marred my best hopes. I was not sad. I was not in despair. I was callous, reckless, and indifferent. My senses were blunted, and my mind unhinged. Robbed of liberty, and chained like a wild beast, I did not, at that moment, dread the knife, nor fear the gallows. The cup of misery was full, and I was sick—sick to loathing of this wretched existence. My agitation keenly affected my nervous system, and I sank, worn out with all kinds of horrible ideas, on the hard pallet. Samuel, who, with the lens of my photographic camera, came back to the tent, was, as he subsequently told me, quite frightened to gaze at me. My whole appearance had undergone a change. My face was red, my eyes fiery, my lips compressed, and I stood before him—to use his own words—more like an enraged Bedlamite than a humble manacled captive. I adjusted the glass, gave the requisite explanation, and then stretched myself again on the comfortless couch. An hour, at least, had elapsed ere I became fully aware of my position, and the dangers by which I was encompassed. I roused myself from this painful lethargy, and, entering into conversation with my inseparable companion, whiled away another hour. About sundown, Joseph, pale and haggard, followed by the bearers of the luggage, returned to his mas-

ter's prison. Sobs and sighs for some minutes sealed his lips. 'Oh, master!' he at length ejaculated, 'you are in the clutches of wicked men, and they will kill you,' he added, with sad solemn emphasis. My books, papers, manuscripts, and a good number of valuable presents, in the shape of skins and silver ornaments, which I had received from the Aboona, were all sequestered. Mr. Samuel, and his coadjutor, M. Bardel, according to Joseph, manifested the most eager desire to find obnoxious and compromising papers. The King several times got tired of the business, and ordered the various articles to be put back again into their places; but the zealous examiners were so intent on their agreeable task, that they scarcely heeded the royal command. The sketches in my book, and my brush and comb, particularly elicited his Majesty's admiration. He made a variety of inquiries about me, the illustrations in the book, and the mode and method of taking photographs. Joseph, who was supposed to be initiated in all the mysteries of his master's lens and collodion, gave the most elaborate, and, no doubt, most lucid explanation of the process. Samuel tried to assist him; but it was quite evident, from his own words, that he did not feel disposed to share the honours of his profound photographic lore with an ignorant, self-conceited African. 'I allowed him,' he said, contemptuously, 'to make his own comments on the comb, which his savage master, the King, stuck in his mop, for I would not argue with him on such a topic. Photography is, however, quite a different thing, and I was determined to oppose, if I could not humble, his arrogant pretensions.' This conversation cheered us up a little, and we were both thinking of composing ourselves to rest, when a whole troop of ruffians, headed by Jaque Obey, a notorious, merciless poltroon, rushed into the tent, and ordered me to follow him. 'Short shrift,' I ejaculated. The soldier to whom I was linked guessed my surmises, and, drawing the fetters by which we were fastened to each other a little tighter, he said, in bated breath, 'The King is angry, and has given you in charge of more rigorous guards.' 'Mashanyies' (leather thongs), bawled out the head gaoler, as we approached the lines under his control. 'Are these ruffians going to tie me with ropes?' I remarked to my servant. The good man, in the bitterness of his heart, curtly rejoined, 'Master, these blacks are fiends.' In the twinkle of an eye the ropes were brought, not, as I suspected, to inflict on me the torture of the *quad*, but to wrench off the old easy chain around the wrist, which allowed me to stand upright, and to give me in its stead a double chain, to bend and cripple the whole frame. The operation of fastening on these cruel fetters confirmed my previous bad opinion of that atrocious villain, Jaque Obey, and his bullies. Held by about a dozen of these wretches, which rendered me quite helpless and passive, my right leg was violently seized, and an iron bar put on the ankle. To tighten this long, broad, and lockless piece of iron, so that the foot might not slip

through, and afford the prisoner facilities to escape, a heavy hammer, or large stone, is plied till the oblong bar forms a hoop around the leg, which no giant arm, unaided, can burst. In the present instance, probably to augment the agony of the captive, many a stroke, as it descended, fell, not on the insensible iron, but on the white man's unresisting limb. One or two of the executioner's satellites manifested some compunction, and addressed a few words of encouragement to me. 'Beat on,' vociferated the infamous leader of the band, 'and, if he moves, let his white skin feel a black hand's strength.' Several volunteers, among whom were some servants of the Negad Ras, a protégé of Consul Plowden, and formerly in his employ, perhaps to resent an old grudge against their master, took a particular delight in battering the shrinking limbs of the defenceless Frendjoj. The operation on the right leg being completed, the left, and then the right arm, had to submit to the same merciless treatment. No criminal of the deepest dye, no outlaw with the brand of infamy on his brow, no fugitive from the just sentence of the law, could possibly have met with a harsher treatment than was accorded to me on that dreadful night by Jaque Obey and his crime-stained crew. I was indeed sick—oh! sick to loathing—of a life fraught with ever-increasing troubles and trials. The warbling and bleeding words of Job found an echo in my bosom, and, like him, I also wished to be 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.' Alone, and in an African prison, amidst beings who, though they had a human form, were dead to every human sentiment, I sought then, as ever afterwards, refuge and protection beneath the shadow and shelter of the cross. The Saviour was indeed with me, and His presence diffused peace and comfort around the captive home of the crushed Missionary. Another week had been added to the never-ending period of affliction and sorrow, without bringing me release or lighter fetters. Food I had none, nor did I much care for it. A flat teff cake, baked by a servant of the gaoler, and a little pepper flour mixed with water, constituted my breakfast and dinner. Consul Cameron sent me every day a most liberal repast; but the soldier, who charitably proffered to convey it from his house to my canvas gaol, unscrupulously appropriated all to his own and his brother's table. Unhappy man! Little did he dream that in a few months more, that very brother whom he fed with provisions robbed from a white captive's scanty supplies—that the same brother would arrest his step, and with his own hand and spear transfix the deserter's faithless heart!"

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE CONSPIRATORS. DEATH OF THE ABOONA.

Throughout this history of woe, the reader will be impressed by the evidence, that it was not the King alone who sought to compass the destruction of the innocent Missionary. The motives by which these fiends in human form were influenced varied in degree and kind. The most artful of these conspirators was the man Samuel, whose knowledge and craft had enabled him to gain the ear of Theodorus. He had personal ends to attain. The destruction of the white men would, he conceived, ensure to himself great advantages in the royal court. Such a hope and desire could only spring from the breast of a man who was capable of every crime, and who hated everything which was noble and good. To this demon of wickedness, the sufferers owed more of the bitterness with which their cup was continually charged, than to any other person. The next in criminality was the Frenchman, Bardel, who was capable of any servile and dishonest act by which he might gain the favour of the King, and add to the misery of the faithful Protestants. Nor did the German artizans, who doubtless felt that their own safety and success depended on their ministering to the royal caprice and vindictiveness, fail to add their quota to the category of wrong. When Mr. Stern steadfastly asserted his innocence, they pretended, that his indisposition to own that he had done any wrong, rendered impossible any interference on their part. When, under the pressure of entreaty, he humbled himself to the dust, they were as ready to affirm, that his acknowledgment of any error, was a hindrance to any effort which they might have made on his behalf. The haughty savages

who surrounded the Throne, regarded all these Europeans as their natural enemies ; and were consequently ready to throw fuel, upon the fire of the wrath of the profligate and incensed Monarch. But wicked and intolerant as Theodorus was, there were times, when, had it not been for these evil influences, the Missionaries would have been liberated from their fetters, and at the utmost banished from the country. Some of these ruffians met, at the hands of their despotic Sovereign, and by other means, the punishment and the ignominious end which they deserved.

Rumours, sometimes of a hopeful and sometimes of an afflictive character, continued to be circulated. About noon one day, a number of the fierce guards marched into the tent, and commanded Mr. Stern to accompany them to the presence of the King.

“Not knowing, and not even caring to know, whether I was about to be led to execution or freedom, I unresistingly allowed the dastardly cowards to drag me to the spot, from whence proceeded the muffled noise that had puzzled me the whole morning. Here, to my surprise, I found the *élite* of the whole army drawn up in a square, with the farthest line occupied by a throne, on which, in proud dignity, sat the savage King, shaded by two gigantic silken umbrellas. ‘Bring the Falasha forward,’ said, in a sharp and shrill voice, the recumbent figure on the throne. Quick as lightning, the heaving mass formed a passage in the centre of the line, and there the pompous despot had the satisfaction to behold his victim, manacled, haggard, and exposed to the rude gaze of a despicable, servile mob. Averting my eyes from the execrable tyrant who had brought on me all that misery, I leisurely and fearlessly surveyed the throng that stared on me in wild, stupid wonderment. Many a face in that gorgeous royal judgment court was familiar to me, though not one had the heart or the courage, to extend to the culprit even a sign of recognition. Messrs. Bardel and Zander, the imperial counsellors, were to the left, and the dignitaries of the church to the right of the dais. Fronting this most uninteresting assemblage, there was a vacant space, covered with new and old, bright and faded carpets, from Turkey, Europe, India, and Persia. From this sacred spot, where none dared to venture unsummoned, extended another line of carpets, on which sat, facing each other, the King’s European workmen, Her Britannic Majesty’s Consul, and the Missionaries. The Consul was in his uniform ; Messrs. Josephson, Staiger, and Brandeis, were in their European garb, over which hung, in approved Court fashion, the white shama ; and all the rest, who were knights of the shirt, shone and sparkled in the dazzling glitter of tawdry harlequins.



“Undaunted by a subservient multitude, and confident in the purity and integrity of my actions, I calmly awaited the issue of that day’s pomp and ceremony. The sight of Mr. Rosenthal, in fetters, and guarded, gave me quite a shock ; and my Christian fortitude (I do not say it in a boastful strain), which always rose higher as the danger became more imminent, almost faltered and flagged. Perfectly ignorant of the offences laid to his charge, I forgot my own misery by reflecting on that of my companion. The distress, agony, and grief of his desolate and friendless young wife, roused every dormant passion of my heart ; and impotent as I was, had it been prudent or practicable, I would that moment have rushed on the craven savage, and defied him in the very midst of his rabble hosts. In my excitement, I unconsciously shook the abominable fetters by which I was tightly held. A pull from the gaoler, that made my arm ache, reminded me that patience and submission, and not boldness and candour, were the virtues I had to practise. Aliga Fanda, the expounder of the *Fetha Negest*, a code of cruel laws, erroneously supposed to be based on that of Justinian, was then read. The servile scribe, who cared for his master’s favour, and not for the maintenance of justice, in a hurried tone, as if ashamed of his own baseness, declared the prisoners worthy of death. Poor man ! He has expiated his cringing, criminal subserviency to an unscrupulous despot, by the same terrible death of mutilation which he often pronounced on others. His innocent wife and her five children experienced a more lenient treatment, for the tyrant spared them the maddening pain of the knife, and graciously dispatched them in the flames of their blazing homestead. An indictment without a proof, and a verdict without a trial, appeared inconsistent, even to the ruthless savage ; and to invest his proceedings with an air of plausibility, the charges against the prisoners were read. Ten articles, I believe, were preferred against me. They were nearly all garbled, perverted, and disconnected extracts from notes and diaries, which the base minions of the tyrant, in the hope of favour and reward, had dexterously disposed to suit their own and their employer’s murderous design. The most formidable crimes alleged against me were, that I had stated his Majesty had no good counsellors ; that he had plundered various districts, and among these the Episcopal domain of Genda ; that he was no friend of our mission ; that he was provoking the hostility of France, and the aggression of Egypt ; that the Abyssinians had no legal marriages ; that I had said that at Dubark, on the Woggera plateau, the King had murdered in cold blood between 700 and 800 people ; and, finally, that I was in correspondence with the Metropolitan, and had a few harmless letters from him in my possession. The only offensive statement in my book, of which I had one solitary copy, that was sent to me by post, consisted in the correct and well-ascertained pedigree of his Majesty.

“Rosenthal’s sins, which were shifted on my shoulders, though I knew not a word of what he had written till that moment, consisted

in some reflections on the King's domestic life, in a private letter to his brother-in-law in London, and in a remark that Abyssinia would probably enjoy greater security under the sway of Egypt, than under the sceptre of its native sovereigns. Mrs. Flad had also fearfully compromised herself in a note addressed to me, and which contained the treasonable observation, that his Majesty still bragged that he would invade England, and conquer Jerusalem. Her Darwinian theory of development at an inverted ratio—viz., that the Abyssinian lion had degenerated into a tiger—the considerate translators had omitted, probably to avert a little longer the hostility of the favoured artizans. She was, of course, arraigned before the august tribunal, but luckily her historical knowledge of the cruelties perpetrated by the Turks in Europe, and which she dreaded to see, during the King's absence on his distant expedition, reenacted in Abyssinia, together with her husband's doubtful position at court, to my delight, gained her the royal clemency and pardon. Such was not the merciful verdict accorded to the other culprits. They were the victims of malicious intrigue and revolting selfishness. They were encompassed by foes, who, whilst they professed friendship and devotion, sought revenge and honours by circumventing their destruction and that of other Europeans, with whom, at the very moment, they were eating, drinking, and interchanging courtesies. Oh! it chills the blood, arrests the pulsations of the heart, and makes one blush to think that beings endued with a soul and conscience, could remorselessly seek to gain their own nefarious ends, by compassing the ruin and death of innocent fellow-creatures! Let philosophers praise, poets admire, and moralists speculate on the innate human virtues: daily experience verifies the old and much-abused truth, 'that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'

"A long time was occupied by the priests and nobles in the vain attempt to show the royal genealogy of their tyrannical master. 'Rogues! Villains! Knaves!' shouted the enraged King, 'I shall teach you to remember who I am, and from whence I come;' and then, turning to the trembling hierarchical party, he poured forth a volley of abuse that established beyond all doubt his true origin. To appease his devouring rage, he turned his tiger gaze on me, and in a blustering jumble of impassioned phrases, challenged me to single combat. I did not reply. This increased his fury, and forgetful of the dignity which he generally tried to maintain, he almost sprang from his lofty seat, shouting, 'Well, if you are not a woman, will you take the choice of the weapon—sword, spear, pistol, or even cannon, and fight me?' Calmly, and without manifesting either fear or contempt, I rejoined, 'I am a priest, and do

not fight.' Whilst this colloquy was going on, two of the chief guards, who were stationed close to Mr. Rosenthal, suddenly, as if struck by an invisible arm, dropped down, and were carried insensible out of the heaving and surging lines. This incident, one might suppose, would have made some impression on the superstitious minds of the tyrant and his hordes, and move them to compassionate the strangers whom he had so outrageously wronged ; but no—nothing could move a heart that was dead to every better feeling, and steeled against the woe of every stranger.

"The charge of pride, to which, in the absence of a better plea, despicable pusillanimity sought a refuge from censure for a guilty indifference to the sufferer's woes, was unsparingly alleged against me. I had unhesitatingly rebutted the accusations of the tyrant, shown that the translators of my papers had been actuated by malice, and, undaunted by multitudes, asserted that the very book from which my enemies had extracted mutilated passages, to effect my condemnation, unequivocally demonstrated my regard and esteem for his Majesty. But if every one shrank from defending my cause, or interceding in my behalf, during that terrible afternoon, I was not forsaken or abandoned ; there was One with me, and His presence supported me in my trouble, strengthened me in my weakness, and conducted me safely through all my exhausting conflicts."

The captives were sent back to their miserable tent, and day after day passed of sorrow and suspense. On one occasion, Jaque Obey, their chief tormentor, entered the tent. "I at once perceived that he was irritated, drunk, and in bad humour. For two or three minutes he sulkily squatted down, and conversed with another Chief, Basha Hailu, on the discovery made among my baggage. Abruptly, as if impelled by a demon-spirit, he broke off the colloquy, and, fixing his ferret eyes on me, in accents that made me start, hissed out : 'If I had my sword I would cut off that white dog's head. Never mind. Get up, you slave, and let me see your fetters!' He did not permit me to obey the injunction, but, suiting the action to the words, he pulled me forward, and began mercilessly to batter the iron hoops around my legs. Wounds, bruises, gashes, all were unheeded by the besotted savage. His friends begged, his subordinates entreated, even his own servants—wretches

who envied the morsel of bread we ate—implored him to desist, and not to break my bones; and still the ruffian persevered in his barbarous work. I quailed and shivered beneath every stroke, but the ferocious Agow would not desist, till he actually saw me drop, faint and almost insensible, on the knee of my poor Joseph. Mr. Rosenthal's chains he also inspected, but as they could not be made tighter, he merely gave him a kick, that sent him rolling into his lair. The horrors of that evening, and some similar scenes, are so vividly impressed on my mind, that I shall remember the spot and the persons to my last hour."

On another occasion, a Chief, accompanied by Samuel, came to the tent, and assured Mr. Stern, that the King would give him a free pardon, and many favours, if he would confess that it was through Ras Oubie's wife, that he had obtained his information concerning the royal descent. Great was the surprise of these miscreants to be told, that Mr. Stern knew nothing of the family, and could not purchase his liberty at the expense of truth and honour.

But a more perplexing attempt was made to force compliance with the wishes of the tyrant, from the helpless servant of God. The rupture which had taken place between the King and the Aboona had assumed serious proportions. The atrocities committed by the despot, and the desolation which he had spread over many of the most fertile provinces, had led to some rebuke from the lips of the Metropolitan. The kindly intercession which he had employed on behalf of the captive, had yet further irritated the profligate Monarch. Although he had received considerate gifts from the Aboona, his implacable hostility could not be appeased. The crafty and designing Samuel was employed, in order to extort from Mr. Stern some admission which the Emperor might use against the Bishop; more particularly in reference to the authority on which the Missionary had given an account of the King's origin. The usual abundant promises were made, in the hope that he might be tempted to make some admission which might serve the King's purpose. But Mr. Stern, raising his right hand, replied, "the Bishop I honour as a friend, and were he even my enemy, neither diversity in our religious sentiments, nor the dread of danger, nor the hope of favour,

should make me swerve from the truth." In a letter to Dr. Shaw, the late Secretary to the Geographical Society, Captain Cameron described what had taken place between Theodorus and the Aboona; and spoke in the highest terms of the bold and uncompromising attitude which the Missionary had taken. That this confidence was thoroughly deserved, the following incidents will show: "One evening a young lad in the service of the Consul, who, together with other servants, had again returned to his master, crept down near me, and adroitly conveyed a small piece of paper into my dead and feelingless hand. I hastily put it in my Bible, thinking it was a letter from a European—a mistake which the Arabic character soon exposed. The note was from the Bishop, and commenced: 'To my brother in Christ, servant of the apostles and prophets,' &c., &c. It then adverted to the sufferings, all, and especially myself, had endured on his account; and quoting certain appropriate passages of Scripture, it concluded abruptly with a remark about money. By the dim glimmer of the guard's light, it occurred to me that the Aboona expected that ere long, I should have to endure a fresh ordeal of the Negoos' retributive vengeance, and that, doubtful about the issue, he wanted me to send him an order for the money I owed him. This warning, for such my warped imagination fancied it to be, gave me a momentary shock, and grasping the ill-boding missive between my numbed fingers, I held it clandestinely to the light, and to my satisfaction discovered that instead of an order for the money I had borrowed, it was a generous offer to advance me more. This incident, trifling as it may appear, inspired me and my fellow-captives with a vague hope, that the reconciliation between the Negoos and the Aboona would effect an improvement in our position—an anticipation which might, perhaps, have been realized, had the susceptible Monarch's offended pride been appeased, by the timely arrival of the long-expected despatch from England.

"No funds, no provisions, in the midst of a tropical winter and an unfeeling race, were matters that made us a little anxious about the future. In this emergency, I applied to our constant friend, the Bishop; and, to our delight, he sent me forty dollars, nearly all the ready cash at his disposal."



Had it not been for the veneration in which this ecclesiastic was held, both by the priests and by the soldiery, it is more than probable that the despot would have accomplished his destruction. His life was, however, drawing to a close. The trials to which he had been exposed doubtless hastened his end. The captives were still incarcerated at Magdala, when Aboona Salama breathed his last. To the close of his life, his efforts had been unceasing to alleviate their sufferings, and effect their deliverance. His death was regarded as a public calamity—and weeping and lamentation resounded from every quarter and from every class, when this was publicly announced.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

The threats and artifices of the emissaries of darkness had not come to an end. Another course was adopted in order to wring admissions from the lips of Mr. Stern. The horrors of death by means of the terrible *giraffe* were to be exhibited to him in all their intensity. About a dozen peasants, who had been robbed by some of the pillage-loving soldiery, were, in the presence of the Missionaries, put to death by these revolting means. For about two hours, they were obliged calmly to stand close to the maltreated and dying men, whose blood was, by the executioners, intentionally spurted upon their persons. "Are you afraid now?" inquired the furious tyrant. But the servant of God recorded that he felt no fear,—he dreaded no death. He expected then and there to suffer by the same torturing process; and had calmly estimated that one hundred of the strokes administered by these Shankgalla giants would terminate his existence. He was again dragged into the presence of Theodorus. Mr. Stern had hardly commenced to plead, that if he had done anything which might be construed into an insult, it was unintentional, and that he and his fellow-captives humbly sought the clemency of the Sovereign, when the royal fiend commanded them to be stripped, and hurried back to their prison house. There, shivering with cold, bruised in body, and crushed in mind, they lay manacled as before, and subjected to the vilest treatment from their savage guards. But although they dared not raise their voices; like Paul and Silas at Phillippi, they were filled with a sense of the Lord's sustaining power, and they inwardly sang praises to Him. Some ragged apparel was sent, to shelter them from the cold, as a special act of mercy.

The climax was now approaching. The officials of the Foreign Office were about still further to exhibit their incompetence, and irretrievably to complicate the question, which it required no great diplomatic ability to solve. The King's request for the sanction of an Embassy, had been treated with contempt; and the letters of Consul Cameron, urging that a reply might be given, had remained unanswered. And now, when death or life trembled in the balance, and when some gleams of hope began to appear, a letter from the Foreign Office dispelled the rising expectation that the day of deliverance might be at hand. Consul Cameron was reproved for having, as the letter untruthfully represented, exceeded his instructions by entering Abyssinia, and peremptorily ordered to return to Massowah. Had the Consul been thoroughly acquainted with the intrigues which at that moment prevailed at the Abyssinian Court, he would doubtless have been content for a time to remain in the position of an unfettered prisoner. But, acting on the instructions he had received, he solicited the royal sanction to his departure for the coast. This was in effect a declaration, that no rejoinder could be expected from England to the King's letter; and the exasperated Monarch threw down the gauntlet, commanded the Consul himself to be arrested and manacled, and cast into prison. All the other Europeans, except those employed in the King's service, were imprisoned at the same time. The property of the Consul and Missionaries was seized, and it was the courage alone of the ladies of the party, which defeated the plan of the miscreants, to rob them and their children of their limited wardrobe.

Some of the Europeans, including Mr. Flad, were soon liberated. These were not the persons whom Samuel desired to injure. There was incontrovertible evidence, that when he was most urbane, he was eagerly endeavouring to bring about the death of Mr. Stern and a few of the others. During each day he passed between the royal residence and the prison house, bearing some message, demanding some explanation, or seeking in every way to entangle and deceive the poor prisoners.

The quarrel between the Monarch and the Aboona had been increasing in intensity. He sought by every means to secure some evidence which might incriminate the Metropolitan. He was

anxious to fix on him the charge, of being the informant through whom Mr. Stern had been made acquainted with his parentage. But no entreaties or threats obtained from the long-suffering Missionary the information which the tyrant sought.

“About sunset his Majesty came galloping over the plain; and, bounding up to his pavilion, he asked some questions, and then there was a sound like the rush of a mighty torrent that had suddenly burst its pent-up limits, and was rolling on in unchecked impetuosity over the ruin and desolation created by its onward progress. M. Bardel, who was outside the tent, explained the cause of the commotion in the brief sentence, ‘The King is coming.’ ‘Dog! Falasha! Scoundrel! tell me the name of the man who reviled my ancestors!’ shouted the enraged tyrant, ‘or I’ll tear the secret out of your hailanya (stout heart).’ I attempted to reiterate what I had said to the delegates in the afternoon; but, ere I could finish a sentence, I was blinded with buffets; whilst, at the same time, several fellows violently seized me by the hand, and began to twist around my arms, hard coarse ropes, formed of the fibres of the Doloussa tree. Rosenthal, simultaneously with myself, experienced similar treatment. His poor wife, thinking that our last moments had come, distractedly ran into the arms of Consul Cameron. The latter, who also believed that all were about to be butchered, called out to me, ‘Stern, we shall soon be in heaven!’ This exclamation the savage King quickly interpreted into an exhortation that I should not compromise the Prelate; and, as if glad of a pretext, Mrs. Rosenthal, under a shower of blows, was driven with her babe into our tent, and then into her own, whilst all the other prisoners, with the exception of Mr. Kerans, who was suffering from illness, were thrown on the ground and pinioned.

“Generally, criminals under torture are only tied around the upper part of the arm, but the white miscreants were deemed malefactors unworthy of such leniency. From the shoulder down to the wrists the cords were rolled fiendishly tight around the unresisting limbs. This being still regarded as insufficient, the swollen, throbbing hands were bound together behind the back, and then other ropes were fastened across the chest, and that, too, with a force that made one gasp for breath. Writhing and quivering in every nerve, we lay in agony on the hard, bare ground. Some prayed; others groaned. Here one, in excruciating torments, rolled about; there another, in desperate frenzy, knocked his reclining head on a loose stone, as if determined to end by suicide his career of suffering. The crescent moon, shining through a white canopy of clouds; the stillness of the guards, broken by the howling of savage dogs as they careered in quest of prey through the camp; and the moans and sighs of the tortured, formed a scene that beggars language to describe. His Majesty, immediately on the application of the ropes, quitted the spot, and repaired to his tent. Samuel, his face

concealed under a black hood, every few minutes made his appearance, and inquired whether I would confess; and on not receiving a satisfactory reply, whispered to the guards, 'Give him another rope round the chest.' Three times he repeated his visits, and three times a couple of soldiers jumped on me, and with ardent delight, as if they felt pleasure in torturing a white man, executed the royal command. To contract the bark ligaments, the executioners now and then poured a profusion of cold water down our insensible backs. 'Speak!' once more repeated the muffled royal messenger; a command which Captain Cameron seconded by shouting, 'Stern, Stern, say what you know!'

"The maddening torture had now lasted about three-quarters of an hour, and still there was no sign that the tyrant would relent in his cruelty. Physically and mentally prostrated, the hand of faith in the prospect of eternity held confidently on to the Eternal Rock, and prayerfully sighed for release from these earthly pangs and woes. The Negroes, probably suspecting that we should succumb beneath a protracted torture, and so elude the clutches of further revenge, ordered the ropes to be removed. Promptly, a score of black hangmen were bending over us and unfastening the cords. This process caused excruciating pains, for the hard bark ligaments rebounding from the stiff, marble limbs, tore away skin and flesh in broad gory shreds.

"Infidelity, scepticism, sneers, and scoffs, were now all merged in one deep and pathetic cry of anguish, fear, and despair. In compliance with the requests of my fellow-sufferers, I poured forth the despair of our hearts to Him who 'heareth the sighing of the prisoners, and delivereth those that are appointed to die.' Our guards, who, on the approach of the King, scowled on us like fiends; now, in a most sympathetic spirit, so characteristic of the transient emotions of the barbarian and savage, rendered us every aid in their power. My own 'kuranyee,' the man to whom I was chained—a kind Galla from Enaree—arranged the pallet on which I slept, and also gently swathed my wounded arms in the soft folds of the shama.

"A harassing and anxious night was followed by a cheerless and desponding morning. Nervously we anticipated some new harrowing message from the King; but, to our delight, he rode out, and the forenoon wore away in silence and stoical apathy. Towards noon, the chief of our guards came into our prison, and, after some desultory remarks, urged me to satisfy his Majesty. 'Tell those who sent you,' I replied, that I have spoken the truth; and if the King does not believe me, I can swear on this book—the Bible, which I raised aloft on my palsied and swollen hand—that the Bishop never spoke to me about his descent.' 'Well,' was the laconic retort, 'you will all get ropes again, and that, too, much severer than last night.' Uncertain about our fate, moments, minutes, and hours passed away in torturing suspense. Near even-



ing, Samuel—that messenger of evil—again obtruded his hated person upon us. He crouched down near Consul Cameron, and with the utmost assiduity tended his wounds. His affability and condescension emboldened me to ask him why the Negroos, after granting me a full pardon, again revived the old affair. A withering scowl gathered over his brow at these words, and, as if panting for breath, he glared at me a few seconds, and then poured forth a volley of frightful abuse. ‘Dog! Falasha! Villain!’ &c., ‘how dare you criticise the King’s actions, and defy his authority? Look here, and behold the sufferings you have inflicted on your brethren. This is poor M. Bardel; and do you know who lies here?’ (pointing to the Consul). ‘This is Victoria.’ Shattered and prostrate as I was, my whole frame shook and trembled at this unmerited rebuke. Samuel, I think, noticed this, and, bending down to me, he whispered confidentially, ‘Come out; I want to speak to you.’ Once in the open air, the raging courtier subsided into the smooth, flattering knave. Placing his hand affectionately on my aching shoulder, he said, ‘Don’t think that I am angry with you; on the contrary, I admire you; but what possesses you, that, for the sake of the Bishop, who is neither your countryman nor of your belief, you incur the wrath of the King, and expose your person to suffering? He is my Aboona (he forgot that he had often told me he was a Protestant), but you are my friend; and I don’t care what happens to him if you only (whose money I have eaten), by obliging the Negroos, win honour and favours.’ I shook my head; and the foiled inquisitor hastened away, muttering no very charitable benison on my devoted head.

“The shades of night had by this time gathered dark and thick around us. The guards took their station, and the white prisoners, after committing themselves to the guardian care of a Divine Protector, composed themselves to uneasy slumbers. The sudden whisper of voices, and the sound of approaching steps, made us start from our leather skins. ‘Cocab! Rosenthal! Makerer!’ roared several voices at once. Leaping mechanically on our feet, we were in an instant out of the tent. Several dark figures in a trice encompassed me, and with ruthless fury dashed their horny hands in my eyes and face. Blow after blow, in quick succession, descended stunningly upon me, whilst at the same time the ropes were rapidly rolled around my wounded and lacerated arms. ‘Tie his legs, too, if he does not confess,’ rang in deep but distinct accents from the royal pavilion, and was re-echoed from the lungs of three other beings, who stood at measured distances to send back my reply. My eyes, dimmed by buffets, started almost out of their sockets; my veins began to swell, and throbbed as if they would burst; and my heart, compressed by the inhuman tightness of the cords, almost stopped its pulsations. Despairingly I raised my inflamed eyes towards heaven, and prayed that the bitter cup might either pass away from me, or, if I was to drain it to the dregs,

that the agony might not be protracted. In less than five minutes my head became dizzy, my eyes dim, and my mind confused, bewildered, and mad. 'Samuel, Samuel!' I shrieked, in frenzied agony, 'what do you want? what do you want?' 'Tell Janehoi all you have been told by the Aboona,' was his calm response. 'Oh! my God! my God!' I mentally ejaculated, 'have I still longer to endure this wasting martyrdom?' and, seized by a fit of delirium, I vociferated in a hoarse, suffocating voice, 'Yes! the Aboona often told me that the King was more dreaded, and possessed more power than any of the former sovereigns of Ethiopia, but that his ambition and cruelty had depopulated the country.' 'Untie his ropes!' commanded a clear and distinct voice, that rang appallingly far above the cooling breeze, as it swept in refreshing gusts over the torn and bleeding limbs of the sufferer."

Mercy, love, and sustaining grace are given to the people of God in the time of their greatest need. The mysterious and afflictive providences of the Most High—the sin and evil which He permits in the world—all these to be understood, must be viewed in the light of eternity. The more precious the jewel, the more severe is the process by which it is polished and prepared, for its place in the heavenly diadem. It is this conviction, which sheds a hallowed light on the afflictions of the children of God, and reconciles them to the deep waters and saddening vicissitudes through which they frequently are led. "Slowly," wrote Mr. Stern, "the weary hours of terror and dread rolled on, Our nerves were horribly shattered, and our minds, too, would have been unhinged, had not religion, with her solacing influence, soothed the asperities and hardships of our existence. The Bible—prayers—a morning and evening exposition of an appropriate passage—were the exercises in which we regularly engaged. No bitter gibes, no harsh expression, no unbecoming word, characterized our intercourse; religion formed a wonderful bond of harmony; and when I looked on the devout countenances that then hung over the inspired page, as I commented on the selected text, I cherished the pleasing hope, that the clouds, so big with wrath, had been charged with showers of everlasting mercy."

"Bad food, heavy fetters, together with the troubles to which we were continually subject, did not, strange as it may seem, impair our health; on the contrary, our appetite increased as provisions diminished; and I believe that, had not the spirit of religion prevailed amongst us, our millet cakes would more than once have

been swallowed with a condiment even hotter than our peppery Abyssinian sauce. Thus day after day was buried in the relentless womb of time, and still our position remained unimproved. Hope, that greatest blessing of man, almost ceased to irradiate the gloom of our captivity, and, in a state of apathy bordering on reckless indifference, the sun rose and set upon the isolated captives in wild Africa. Our mornings generally commenced with the dawn, when all, except the Consul, who indulged in later hours, had a small tin of black, bitter coffee, and a piece of wheaten bread. About ten we had Divine worship, which consisted in reading the Psalms and a chapter out of the Old and New Testament, an exposition, and extempore prayer. Mid-day, a dirty basket, containing five or six half-baked teff, or mashilla flaps, followed by a sooty saucepan, containing some boiled lentiles, was brought into our tent. An ebony-coloured woman—a curious specimen of the Shankgalla race, formerly in the service of Consul Plowden—instantly bared her arm, and dashing it up to the wrist in the uninviting decoction, threw piece after piece of the soaked cakes into the basket, around which the prisoners, with becoming gravity, were squatted. Mystoura, the cook, a liberated Galla slave, occasionally varied the bill of fare, and we had sun-dried fish, called *quanto*; or a very limited quantity of fresh meat, transformed into a stew; or, if she was in a very good humour, which could not have been very often the case, she sent us a mess of paste, a wretched imitation of macaroni. Consul Cameron fared somewhat more luxuriously; and Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal dined privately, in a small tent that was assigned them as a special favour. Towards sunset we again had prayers, and then a second sumptuous repast, after which each one tried to woo sleep to his eyes. The King, to our infinite satisfaction, no longer took any notice of us; and, had it not been for the annoyances of the insufferable tabaguces, our life of misery would have flowed on, in an even, uniform course.”

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE WAVES AND BILLOWS.

During the weeks and months of acute, and apparently interminable suffering, through which the Captives had been passing, many circumstances were frequently arising which added to the royal indignation, and seemed to darken the lowering clouds with increased gloom and terror. The Abyssinians, resident in Jerusalem, had been expelled from their Convent. That body of professing Christians had long looked to the British Consul for protection against the despotism of the Turks, and the enmity of the various apostate Churches whose head-quarters were situated in the Holy City. It is needless to enquire, how far this protection had been ever offered, or practically withdrawn. The Head of the Abyssinians at Jerusalem had arrived at the Court of Theodorus, to complain of the injustice which his people had sustained; and in so doing became an agent, for stimulating the prejudices and anger of the King against the British nation. The Abyssinian Bishop had reported, that the Coptic priests had been in league with the Turks, to effect their expulsion; and that, while he had repeatedly besought the interference of the British Consul, he had been told that this was impracticable.

Mr. Stern's book, entitled "Wanderings among the Falashas in Abyssinia," had hardly passed through the press on his departure from England. A copy had followed him by post, and its contents afforded the conspirators a fruitful field from which, to invent and misrepresent the opinions of the Missionary, and to stimulate the King to renewed barbarities. The Frenchman, Bardel, had been one of

the primary agents in these deeds of shame. Mr. Steiger, the Missionary from the Scotch Church, wrote from Gaffat, in December, 1864, that "the chief cause of the King's animosity, next to the natural heart unrenewed by God, was the influence of a certain Frenchman named Bardel. He had come to Abyssinia three years ago, as Secretary to the English Consul, but had been sent to France with a letter to the Emperor Napoleon. When he returned from Paris with an official answer, he brought at the same time a private commission from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and his Jesuit friends, to endeavour by all means to destroy the Protestant Missions in Abyssinia, and to plant Roman Catholic missionaries in their stead—the price of his endeavours being a Vice-Consulship. He executed his commission with a subtlety and ingenuity which is truly surprising, and which none but a Frenchman taught in a Jesuit school could have learnt. But truly," added Mr. Steiger, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men. Wonderfully has the saying been fulfilled, 'he that diggeth a pit for others, will surely fall into it himself.' Through his own intrigues he has fallen, for ere his work was completed his punishment came. He is now in prison, chained, with Mr. Stern, whose fall he had so desperately striven to compass. When he saw his plans frustrated, he confessed his wickedness to his companions, whose captivity he shares."

The man Samuel had been an attendant or "introducer" to Consul Cameron. We are not informed how he managed to ingratiate himself with the King. But his unscrupulous greed, and his thirst for power, impelled him to sacrifice anyone who might stand in the way of his nefarious designs. He had nominally exchanged Mahommedanism for the tenets of the Abyssinian Church, and had then professed that he had renounced that communion for Protestantism. There was the fullest evidence that he, above all others, sought the destruction of the Missionaries, and probably that of his former employer, Consul Cameron.

The dissensions between the King and the Aboona was another element of incessant danger and trouble. Just at the time, when the personal influence of the latter might, under favourable circum-



stances, have neutralized the Monarch's irritation at the neglect with which his letter had been dealt with by the British Government, or at least secured good treatment to the Captives, the friendship which existed between himself and Mr. Stern intensified rather than mitigated their sufferings. The jealousy of the Chiefs, who were the parasites and flatterers of the King; and the spite of the German artisans, who had cast their religious profession to the moles and to the bats, and become the obsequious servants of the despot, added fuel to the flame. It is necessary to group these facts together, and to note how, by an extraordinary and unexpected association of circumstances, the savage and excited nature of Theodorus was stimulated to the perpetration of the most flagrant iniquities; in order that it may be understood how the afflictions of the Missionaries were aggravated and prolonged.

“‘Keremt,’ or winter, as the rainy season is emphatically designated, was now rapidly approaching. Almost every noon the sky became darkened, and lowering clouds, amidst the reverberations of the thunder, poured down deluging floods. Our frail cotton tent, which had already for more than four months resisted the wear and tear of guards and prisoners, sun and wind, notwithstanding the skilful patching of Pietro and Makerer, freely admitted the pelting torrent. During the day the horrors of the tempest were still mitigated by the scanty coverings in which each could muffle his shivering frame; but by night, when wedged between suspicious guards, who tremblingly rose at the slightest clang of the heavy chains, one was forced patiently to press the inundated couch. The King twice or thrice, in riding out, gave a musing glance across our fence, which led us to anticipate that our wretched apology for a shelter, would soon be exchanged for some more substantial covering—an expectation that was never destined to be realized. Condemned to wet and filth, our misery was intensified by the foul aroma of the coarse guards, who in crowds obtruded their offensive persons upon us. Goaded to desperation, we sent one afternoon to Samuel, and requested him to regulate the watch. Samuel mentioned it to the King, and the reply was, ‘If they don’t like to come in contact with my people, give them foot-chains, and let only two soldiers watch in the tent.’ This unexpected threat of fresh suffering, gave us an unmistakable cue to his Majesty’s sentiments towards us; but, without allowing such an ebullition of hatred to depress our spirits, we determined henceforth passively to endure every hardship that might still fall to our lot.”

The spread of small-pox, the general prevalence of other diseases, and the sufferings of the people, prompted the King to change his

camp. This was removed to *Assasso*, about three miles from Gondar, and was the beginning of the movement which ended in the incarceration of the prisoners in the royal prison at *Amba Magdala*.

On the 6th, towards evening, Basha Tecka, the commander of the fusiliers, paid us a visit, and ordered our foot-chains to be removed for hand-chains. The operation of unriveting the massive irons required the efforts of eight powerful savages, and even these had to exert all their strength to accomplish the feat. We were immediately linked together in pairs, by shackles fastened around the wrists. The wonted insolence of the conceited Ethiop, which had been often enough exhibited towards us, was on the present occasion not omitted; and many a vile sarcasm was, during the hammering of the irons, expended on the defenceless white prisoners. On the following morning, a formidable guard came to escort us to the camp. Consul Cameron and myself, who, at our own request, were chained together for the ride, formed the most unhappy pair. Enervated by suffering and sickness, I was in no condition to manage the young and untamed mule which I received orders to mount; nor was my companion, whose nerves and mind were dreadfully shaken, better fitted for the novel exercise. Seizing the restive animal by his clumsy bridle, I vaulted into the saddle, and, with my unfettered hand, sought to adjust my shama, when Consul Cameron, unmindful of his black Arab cloak and European cap, moved in front. The unruly animal instantly commenced his mad pranks, and, ere I could firmly grasp the crupper, I was dragged sideways by the short chain, and fell bleeding on the hard ground. We now, in opposition to the imperative commands of our guards, determined to accomplish the journey on foot, but a boisterous 'min abadu' ('who is their father') obliged us to desist from our resolution. The road for a short distance led across a stony, undulating tract, and then gradually declined into a rich pasture land, intersected by numerous streamlets and torrents, where every step was difficult and dangerous. Notwithstanding my accident, we jogged on tolerably well; nay, had not Consul Cameron frequently become oblivious of the present, and allowed his mule to make a circuit around the head of his neighbour, the trip might have proved beneficial to our depressed spirits.

In another passage, Mr. Stern wrote thus of the characteristics of the journey, by which he and his fellow-prisoners were being conducted towards the scene of their future and long protracted incarceration.

"Shackled in couples around the wrists, and guarded by a band of armed fusiliers, we were now led out of the narrow enclosure in which we had been closely confined for more than two months. The King, more intent on torturing than on destroying the hated

and envied 'Frendjoj,' had given orders that we should be provided with mules; but the escort being well aware that prisoners are not objects of much consideration, did not feel quite disposed to comply with this high behest. The ride from Gondar to Assasso had not increased our relish for bestriding a mule in fetters; and at my suggestion, all, except Mrs. Rosenthal, who had a baby in her arms, consented to try the strength of their legs. The soldiers highly approved of this resolution; and after Mrs. Rosenthal was mounted, we set forward in a placid if not cheerful humour. Some minutes' walk brought us to a precipice, at whose foot extended far and wide the fertile plain of Dembea. Like children freed from the restraint of the school-room, we leaped and scrambled over dislocated pieces of rock and loose gravelly paths, with a recklessness that inspired our tabaguees with the dread, that these mad pranks were only artful tricks to cover a secret design to effect a sudden escape. Once in the plain, these terrors were dispelled; and, marshalled between a detachment of troops, we were driven along more like wild beasts, than the innocent victims of a rancorous despot. For about two hours we kept up a brisk march, and then our feet began to get sore, and one couple after another slackened their pace. Consul Cameron, supported by the sinewy arms of Makerer, to whom he was linked, was the first who declared himself knocked up and unable to move farther. A kind soldier—a perfect curiosity in this land of heartless selfishness—generously offered him his mule to mount, a favour which was gratefully accepted. I felt much disposed to imitate my fellow-prisoner, but as good Samaritans do not abound in Abyssinia, I tried with lively converse to invigorate my wearied and trembling limbs. The plain, clothed in the most variegated vegetation of the tropics, and dotted with copses and brushwood, around which the dog-rose, eglantine, honeysuckle, and an endless variety of convolvuli, had woven festoons that defied the skill of the florist, afforded ample materials for mutual converse.

"Luckily, our escort pitied my worn-out state, and allowed us to halt every few minutes, a favour which was not so prodigally extended to our friends in advance. On nearing the camp, I exerted all my energies to accomplish the short distance that still lay before us; but my eyes waxed dim, my legs began to tremble, my heart violently palpitated, and I sank repeatedly, faint and prostrate, on the wet grass. This was at the outskirts of the camp, and we had only about ten minutes more to the halting-place, yet even this short distance my aguish limbs refused to perform. The guards in advance anticipated our plight, and, what was a perfect wonder, they actually brought us two mules to mount. I expected my companions would overwhelm me with showers of reproach, but excess of fatigue had closed their lips, and I only heard from two an ironical *sotto voce*, 'Well, will you walk again?' Meanwhile, our tent arrived, and the tabaguees, anxious to be released, set to work to pitch it. This was no easy job, for the decayed and rotten tat-

ters, too feeble to bear the strain of the ropes, gave way at every pull. By dint of perseverance, it at last fluttered in the breeze more like a good old flag than anything worthy the name of a shelter. By accident, Bardel and myself, Kerans and Pietro, occupied the side which still could boast of a few hanging shreds, whilst Consul Cameron and Makerer literally had the earth for their bed, and the sky for their canopy. At midnight, a storm, accompanied by impetuous torrents of rain, burst upon us. The uneven, swelling plain, formed, for a little while, a temporary barrier to the noisy floods, but the pitiless tempest ere long overstepped these natural boundaries, and muddy rivulets, in tumultuous hurry, careered over every part of the Imperial camp. We tried to shelter ourselves under skins, but finding these efforts unavailing, we laid down in the rolling and splashing waters, and, what many may think incredible, enjoyed in this position a sound and refreshing sleep. Mr. Rosenthal's fragile tenement was almost entirely swept away by the unsparing nocturnal blasts; and, cold and shivering, he, his wife, and babe, sighed for the dawn of day. Fortunately, they had some bed clothing still left—the *débris* of their plundered property—and these, by patching and stitching, they succeeded in converting into a tolerable covering. We were too many, too poor, and too lazy, to make a similar effort; in fact, had we possessed the material and inclination, we would not have improved the old, or purchased a new tent, from the well-founded dread that it might attract around us crowds of tabaguees, whose proximity invariably caused us far more annoyance than wind or rain.

“We remained at Ferga from September 24th to October 14th, and then again set forward. The journey from this to the capital of Begemeder occupied fifteen days, of which only three were spent in actual travelling. On reaching Debra Tabor, we expected that a messenger from Gaffat would meet us; but in vain we wistfully strained our eyes in all directions, to discover the face of a known servant, or the white countenance of a ‘Frendjoj.’ Probably the majority, if not all, would have gladly gone to see us had they not dreaded the cruel tyrant, whose proximity freezed, if it did not entirely damp and extinguish, every feeling of sympathy towards those who had incurred his displeasure. As we did not obtain unsolicited intelligence from the Europeans who were located about two miles’ walk from our resting-place, we sent one of our servants for that purpose to Mr. Flad. The messenger returned in the evening loaded with potatoes, bread, milk, and a small note, which contained the tantalizing news, that his Majesty, during the two or three conferences with the Gaffat white workmen, had always carefully avoided to allude to our affairs. Once, during an interview, some one ventured to advert to our position, but the Negroes did not deign to notice his remark on that disagreeable topic. Several days of heartburning suspense had already elapsed, and still there was no other amelioration in our condition, beyond that we had an ample supply of wholesome food from Gaffat.

“On the 5th of November, 1864, the cheering tidings were communicated to us, that Cantiba Hailu, the late Governor of Gondar, a man highly esteemed by the King and the European workmen, had received orders to proceed to the camp, and to conduct us and our French fellow-sufferers free, to a new home, in the vicinity of our countrymen. We were already in spirit revelling in the luxury of unshackled limbs, when at the very moment that we expected to hear the tramp of our liberators’ mules, and to grasp their extended hands, one messenger followed by another came to announce that the humane intentions of his Majesty had been defeated by a report of Samuel, confirmed by Dejatch Barea, the Governor of Tigré, that a British general and troops had landed at Massowah, and that another great man, whether French or English was not stated, had also arrived at Senaar; and that both publicly declared, that they were determined to move towards Abyssinia, to effect our deliverance either by mediation or force of arms. This unexpected blight of our fond anticipations came upon us like a thunderclap, but the soul, when pressed down by a succession of calamities, either becomes callous and apathetic, or tries to obtain calmness and comfort for the troubled heart in prayer, and the promises of the inspired page. This was the case with us. Tried, troubled, and almost worried to the last point of endurance, the mind would have become blunted, had it not soared above the woes of life, and in the contemplation of the future sought an antidote against the oppression and tyranny of the present. Doubt and misgivings being now removed, we resigned ourselves to our fate, and, in listless indifference or child-like submission to an all-wise Protector, prayerfully awaited the solution of our complicated history. On November the 7th, I got a note from Mr. Flad, which contained the dreadful intelligence that we were next day to be escorted to Magdala, the penal settlement of the ‘Negoos Negest.’ During my first visit to this misgoverned country, I was nearly forced to see this uninviting Amba, in order to have an interview with the Aboona, then in disgrace; and although at that time I was free, and buoyed up by the cheering prospect of initiating a promising mission in Central Africa, yet I blessed a gracious Providence who brought me in contact with the successor of Fromentius, ere I had accomplished my first stage; and now my whole frame shuddered at the idea of a deportation in chains to that very rock, which once, under the most auspicious circumstances, I had an invincible repugnance to approach. Mr. Flad, in his missive, laboured to soften the asperity of our destiny, by predicting a speedy change; but we felt that, humanly speaking, our fate was sealed, and that only a higher power could, and would deliver us out of the hands of a ruthless savage.”



## CHAPTER XXXV.

### ENGLAND'S SORROW AND SUPPLICATIONS.

Sunshine had been succeeded by a tempest of alarming magnitude. The letters which had reached England from Abyssinia were full of hope and encouragement. The work and prospects of the Mission to the Falashas appeared to be fruitful in promise. The general details of the Mission had been organized, and placed on a basis, which promised to be productive of satisfactory and permanent results. The friends of Mr. Stern, and the Committee of the London Society, were now in daily expectation of some tidings concerning his departure from Abyssinia, and his hoped-for arrival at Massowah. Not a circumstance had come to their knowledge to indicate, that anything had been taking place which might compromise the safety of the beloved Missionary, or prove disastrous to the work in which he had laboured.

Almost simultaneously with these announcements, a letter was received from Khartoum from Mr. C. F. Hausmann, an agent of the Basle Society, dated January 2nd, 1864, giving a detailed narration of the captivity and sufferings of the Missionaries, and of the circumstances by which these sufferings had been accompanied. The minds of all who had any acquaintance with these servants of God, or who had watched with interest the progress of their mission, were filled with consternation and alarm. The intelligence spread through the press with great rapidity. Letters of inquiry, and suggestions concerning the wisest course to pursue, were pressed, without intermission, upon the attention of the London Committee. They placed themselves at once in communication

with the Foreign Office, and were informed that similar despatches had been received by the Government; that Consul Cameron was also a prisoner; and that orders had been sent by telegraph to Egypt, that every available means were to be employed, in order to effect the liberation of the Captives. Had it not been for the existence of the Consulate, it is not too much to say that these calamities would never have occurred; but now that the Consul himself was a prisoner, an indirect pledge was given, that the deliverance of the other Captives would be considered to be inseparable from his own. The intervention of the Government on behalf of the Missionaries would otherwise have proved to be as unlikely, as any attempt at the present time, to call the murderers of the late Bishop Hannington to account, in the depths of equatorial Africa.

Hope and expectation day by day agitated the hearts of the relatives and friends of the Captives. Any moment, it was believed, might convey the intimation that the barbarous ruler of Abyssinia had relented, that the Captives had been freed from their shackles, and were on their way to the coast. But the weary months passed on, and the months were gathered into years, and yet no ray of light broke in upon the dark and sorrowing prospect.

On the 22nd of March of the same year (1864), the Committee of the London Society passed the following resolution:—"That this Committee feel themselves called upon to deplore, with all the friends of Jewish Missions, this heavy trial which, by Divine permission, has befallen their brethren in Abyssinia, just at a moment when the Rev. Mr. Stern was on the point of returning to Europe to tell 'what great things the Lord had wrought.' While humbly submitting to the Divine will, the Committee desire to record their prayerful sympathy with their suffering brethren and sisters, and to condole with the members of their respective families, on the heavy trials they are called upon to endure, but which will not fail to call forth on their behalf the sympathies and prayers of the Church at large."

No event, it may with confidence be said, had ever more generally called forth the prayers of the people of God. During this painful and protracted crisis, there were many persons, from whose

thoughts, the sufferings and need of their captive brethren, were never absent. When subsequent communications announced the sickening and agonizing details which have already been given, there were some who wrestled with tears before God, that help and deliverance might be vouchsafed to the oppressed. An honoured member of the London Society's Committee—Judge Payne—whose interest in every Evangelical work was almost proverbial—was among the first to call at the Society's House on the morning that the startling intelligence appeared in the daily papers. He referred to the circumstances which accompanied the release of Peter ; who was fast in prison—bound with chains—sleeping between two soldiers ; and “prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.” This he said proved to be the instrument, by which the Lord caused his fetters to be loosened, and his deliverance to be accomplished. Another member of the Committee, in answer to the anxious pleadings of Mr. Stern's afflicted and devoted wife, observed, “Your husband has a charmed life, I shall not despair of seeing him again on the platform in Exeter Hall.” On a subsequent occasion Mrs. Stern informed this friend, who had been watching with prayerful anxiety the progress of events, that she had conveyed to her husband the cheering words that had been spoken at their previous interview ; and that although many of her letters failed to reach their destination, the particular letter referred to, was duly received and gratefully acknowledged by the suffering captive. And it may be, that the knowledge of the hair-breadth escapes, and wondrous providences which had marked his previous history, operated as powerfully as any other causes, for the sanguine expectations which many encouraged concerning his release.

The great distance from the coast, and the difficulty of access to the central parts of Abyssinia, occasioned incessant doubt and irresolution as to the course which it would be best to pursue. The intelligence, which was received at lengthened intervals, and of a very imperfect kind, led to incorrect conclusions concerning the true causes of these disasters, and useless suggestions as to the means by which the severities of Theodorus might be mitigated, and the Captives allowed to depart. Had the friends of the prisoners been made acquainted with the influences which were at work in

the depraved Court of the King, to intensify their sufferings, and, if possible, to bring about their death, their anxieties would have been sensibly increased. But the despot was recognized as the only person whose caprice and tyranny had inaugurated and continued the ill usage which the prisoners had received, and whom it was necessary to conciliate. Many tearful eyes eagerly scanned the daily papers, in the hope that a despatch might announce that the day of deliverance had come. A pencil-note had been received from Gondar, dated February 14th, 1864, stating that Consul Cameron, Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, Kerans, Bardel, and others, were all in chains. The British Political Agent and Resident at Aden had accompanied this with a letter, dated the beginning of April, stating that in his opinion the Captives were in no danger of personal injury, beyond the inconvenience of confinement; and at the same time intimating, that no efforts should be wanting on his part, in order to effect their release. It seemed strange, that he could not at that time have been aware of the cruelties to which Mr. Stern, at least, had been subjected, from the very commencement of these calamities.

It was not till October of the same year that a letter was received from Mr. Flad, dated Gaffat, May 27th, 1864. This arose from the great difficulty of obtaining the services of natives, who would run the risk of conveying any letters to Massowah. Mr. Flad wrote to the Secretary of the London Society as follows:—"As an opportunity offers, I take my pen to send you some account of our present circumstances; though my heart yearns to give you circumstantial details. For certain reasons I cannot do so now, but hope, through our friend Hausmann, you have received the verbal communications I was able to send him. The Lord's hand lies heavily upon us—it often appears as if he had forsaken us, and withdrawn His mercy—yes, as if the heavens above us were closed, because our prayers seem to remain unanswered. Our misery and need are great. We comfort ourselves with God's Word, and commend our concerns to Him. He will do all things well. Even should it please Him, in His inscrutable and mysterious counsel, that we should be sacrificed, His will be done; in our Saviour we have found peace. He is the propitiation for our sins, our comfort in suffering,

our hope in death, and our joy in the resurrection ; it is further, a comfort to have the assurance, that our work for Him and His kingdom in this country has not been in vain. The time will come when others may reap what we have sown, and then we shall rejoice with them before the throne of the Lamb. This prospect in our darkest hours often sweetens the bitterness of our sufferings.

“Mr. Stern is still bound, as also the English Consul, Cameron, with all his European servants. Mr. Rosenthal is free, and lives with his wife and child near them ; they are all still in the royal camp at Gondar. I, with my dear wife and two children, live three days’ journey from them, in Gaffat, with the two missionaries of the Scotch Society, and two German huntsmen. Although we have no longer chains on our hands, we are still prisoners. Communication with those in Gondar has, God be praised, not yet been cut off; and so I have been able to supply them from hence with money, medicines, &c., which is a great mercy.

“We now expect every day the arrival of a letter from the English Government; but know not what its effects will be to us ; it will either procure our liberation, or more severe imprisonment. The gentleman who came here with me, was taken ill with dysentery, in consequence of which he died on the 10th of April.”

After an interval of several months, another letter from Mr. Flad, written from Gaffat, reached the Secretary of the Society; in which he briefly stated, that, since he last had the opportunity of writing, the circumstances of the Captives, and those who were still allowed their liberty, had not improved. He related, that they had, during the rainy season, been exposed to much suffering, and that it was marvellous that they were still alive. The prisoners he described as being removed from place to place, wherever the camp of Theodorus was pitched; and that the impression existed, that they would be incarcerated in some fort, probably that of Magdala. He added: “All our proselytes have followed me hither ; they are in the greatest need and poverty, having been robbed of all their property. Some have in consequence been brought nearer to the Lord, and now willingly and patiently bear their cross ; others, on the contrary, have gone on the road to destruction, on which all



Abyssinian Christians walk; they have left, and are wandering about like sheep without a shepherd. Those who are still here, come to me on Sundays to the Bible Class. Debtera Beru shows himself everywhere as a light shining in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. May the Lord preserve him by His grace, and richly anoint him with His Holy Spirit, to be a witness of His great love and grace.”—At the same time a letter was received, which Mr. Stern had written to Mr. Flad. It was the first communication in the handwriting of the most prominent among the sufferers. As such, it was read with peculiar interest and emotion. “Your last lines gave us some hope that perhaps in a few months our sufferings would come to an end, but this hope has again vanished. The Consul-General will no doubt send back a friendly letter. God can deliver us all, and who knows if the time is not nearer than we think for. Let us all be earnest and diligent in prayer, and the Lord will not forsake those that are His. Thanks to all the brethren in Gaffat, for their endeavours to get us liberated. When you send to Massowah, kindly write to my wife in my name—I have no ink, nor heart to write myself,—‘Do not despair, but trust in the Lord, and in His own time we shall be reunited. I have suffered a martyr’s trials, and also experienced a martyr’s consolation. If the British Government act wisely, we may all get out; but should they adopt harsh and severe measures, the consequences will, humanly speaking, be serious.’ Tell her also, that she and my dear children, are never absent from my mind, and are remembered in my almost hourly intercessions at the throne of grace.”

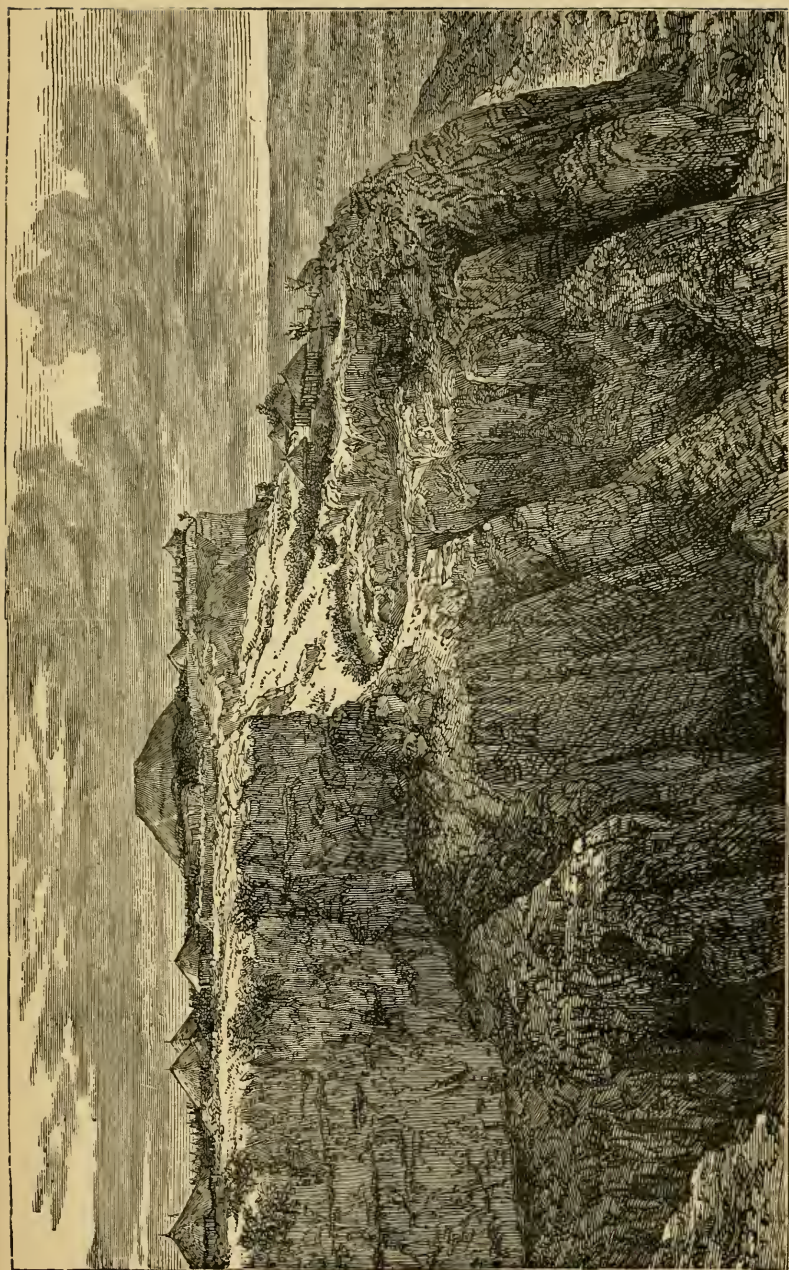
During this time, the President of the London Society, the Earl of Shaftesbury, had with ceaseless assiduity kept up communication, personally and by letter, with the Foreign Office; and obtained the assurance, that the Missionaries should share in all the efforts which were being employed for the release of the British Consul. Thus passed away many a weary month of anxious and prayerful suspense.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### MAGDALA.

The last communication which had reached the Committee of the London Society, had conveyed an indistinct impression of the state and circumstances of the prisoners. It was clear that they were being removed from place to place, and that their lives and health were exposed to incessant risks and dangers. But a profound mystery seemed to enshroud the causes which had led to these bitter persecutions, and the ground on which they were so relentlessly continued. Every possible scope was given to conjecture, and to the imagination. But, however dismal and heartrending were the pictures thus conjured up of privation and suffering, they but feebly represented the extent and intensity of those through which the Captives were passing.

The Lord “stayeth His rough wind in the day of his east wind”—that wind, it has been well said, is “tempered to the shorn lamb.” However difficult of access, there were friends in the country ready to minister to the wants of the prisoners. We have seen how large-hearted and considerate were the sympathies and help of the Aboona. When Consul Cameron was at large, he used every means for conveying to Mr. Stern supplies of money and provisions; and Mr. Flad was continually on the watch in order to attain the same end. Without this, there is little doubt that Mr. Stern, and some of his fellow-sufferers, would have perished. The secret agents who were employed in this delicate and difficult matter, were well paid; and they therefore knew that it was for their own advantage that the lives of the prisoners should be preserved. Succour



MAGDALA. HOUSE OF KING THEODORUS.



and sympathy were in a measure maintained, and, apart from the coarse and insufficient provisions which the royal commands permitted, clandestine sources of more nourishing sustenance were mercifully vouchsafed.

As the captives were dragged from one point to another, accompanying the movements of the restless and tyrannical Monarch, reports would be of frequent recurrence as to their probable fate. At times it appeared as if there was but a step between them and death, and at other times, circumstantial accounts reached them, of the means which were being employed in order to bring about their deliverance. The one was generally as unfounded as the other. Theodorus had no intention of putting his prisoners to death. Had this been his design, the wily devices of Samuel and the other conspirators would have ere long accomplished it. But he was infatuated with the idea, that both among his own subjects, and among European States, his greatness and glory would be increased by dragging at his chariot wheels these few defenceless men. The whole history shows, that, however much he might at times have inspired hopes of their release, his only intention had been, to draw more securely around them the meshes of bondage and subjection.

Mr. Stern and his companions had vainly hoped, that at Debra Tabor they would be released from their fetters. But the prayerfully desired change came not—and their worst fears were concentrated in the announcement, that they were to be removed to the frowning and ill-reputed fortress of Magdala. They had heard enough of its history—of the wholesale execution and death of its inmates—to know that most of those who entered its portals gave farewell to hope. But however dismal might be their forebodings, they felt that underneath were “the Everlasting arms;” and that all things were possible to Him, who ordereth all things according to the counsel of His own gracious will.

“On the 8th (November, 1864) we quitted Debra Tabor, the goal where we had confidently imagined that our manacles would be removed, and our captivity come to an end. Our first place was Jan Meeda, the spot where the late Copt Patriarch, the ambassador of the Viceroy of Egypt, was incarcerated by the artful barbarian,



whose smiles and suavity ought never to have duped a white man. Here Mr. Waldemaier, *en passant*, paid us a flying visit. He did not alight from his horse; and the noble steed, as it stood neighing and stamping the ground outside the fence in which we were shut up, conjured up to our minds visions of freedom and liberty, that made the irons burn like fire around the wrists. From this to Magdala is about a hundred and fifty miles, which a native can easily perform in five days; but, although we were mounted, it still took seven days to traverse that distance. The mountains, valleys, and deep ravines, clad in bright verdure, and exhaling at the slightest breath a balmy fragrance, would, under ordinary circumstances, have ravished the senses; but suffering had dimmed our sight, and thrown a funereal pall over these matchless scenes. Villages and hamlets we saw very few; the puissant King had, since his accession to the throne, changed the aspect of these lovely regions, and transformed plains and slopes, once the abode of comfort and plenty, into wilds and deserts, where the lion, leopard, and hyena roam unscared. Our party, which, since the departure from Bege-meder, had considerably increased, did not much tend to beguile the fatigue and toil of the route.

“Our fellow-criminals, for such, whether justly or unjustly, they were ‘reputed to be,’ experienced even still harsher treatment than their white companions; and once, after halting, to our horror, they had to form an acquaintance—though only a slight acquaintance—with the torturing rope.

“The Alpine ranges of the Wollo Galla, extending in fantastical and shapeless masses far beyond the verge of the horizon, grew more and more conspicuous, on our approach to the flat-topped rock that was the limit of our journey. Blazing watch-fires, those primitive beacons to proclaim the advance of the foe, in eddying clouds rose high in the air, giving the whole scene the aspect of an active volcanic region. Descending 3,500 feet, we crossed the Beshilo, which, after its junction with the Djiddah, about thirty miles farther south, debouches into the Abai, or Blue Nile. From thence, the road lay through a shady defile, flanked on both sides by lofty ranges, which shut out from view every object except the nebulous sky; which, in pity to the worn-out prisoners, tempered the flaming rays of a tropical sun. Gradually the road widened, and a chaos of gigantic piles, heaved up by a terrible convulsion, in majestic confusion, stood out in bold relief towards the southern horizon. Threading along a succession of almost perpendicular ascents, we at last reached a broad, grassy terrace, sheltered by the refreshing gloom of Nature’s mighty ramparts; and here, to our delight, we were ordered to dismount. Our servants, who had some provisions, not having yet arrived, we were reduced to feast on the pure air, which in fragrant gusts was wafted from the Galla heights across our camping-ground. Mrs. Rosenthal, who was more provident in her *ménage* than her neighbours, kindly sent us a tin of

coffee, which, like the loving cup, circulated from hand to hand, till it was drained to the very dregs. The following day we remained encamped, and then once more mounted our mules, to scale the steep sides of the lofty Amba.

“Climbing about 1000 feet more, we came to *Salamige*, a dell hemmed in to the west by a flat-topped rock, called *Salasie*; and another, opposite to the south-east, bearing the distinguished name of *Amba Magdala*. On this spot, we found all the state prisoners, in number about two hundred, awaiting the royal mandate to proceed to their isolated Amba home. Placed between files of troops, clad in their holiday garbs, many a painful spasm, shot through the heart on reflecting on the past, and in contemplating the future. A group of Chiefs in their flaunting rainbow-coloured shirts now came running towards us, and instantly the whole party was in motion. Many a sinister, black visage was turned upon us, and many an ill-boding sentence was uttered against us, as we were driven through a narrow gap up into the dreaded fortress. That his Majesty had been bragging about his European Captives, was evident from the deportment of the wild hordes; and this idea, which was uppermost in the minds of a few of us, did not tend to soothe the agony of the lacerated heart. Gasping and panting, we at length emerged out of a rude, strong gateway, on to the summit of the Amba. Again a short halt was ordered, and then once more all hurried forward, towards a collection of sugar-loafed huts—the dwellings of his Majesty’s Court. All, in a twinkling, lay prostrate in the dust; but the profound obeisance, instead of meeting a response, remained unnoticed amidst the boisterous shouts for arackee. The malefactors and their servile guards paused; but, as the Negroos indulged in his orgies, we were driven on to our lodging—the prison.”

Within the natural ramparts of this terrible fortress, Theodorus was encamped. The extensive plateau afforded ample space for the reception of a considerable force, and for the huts and other miserable receptacles, into which the prisoners of all kinds were packed and chained.

“Exiled to an isolated rock, in the midst of a strange people, and in an inhospitable land, our position compelled us to banish all vain regrets, in which sorrow loves to indulge. Impatience might have increased, but could not mitigate, our misery; and visions of a happy past would only have deepened, and not softened, the gloom of the terrible present. We were prisoners, and, with all the energy we could muster, we struggled against the troubles and difficulties of our sorrowful existence. The great object which, on nearing our Amba home, engaged our thoughts, was the place where we should be confined. In the camp and on the march we had, if not a real tent, something of an apology for one; but now

we were to be stationary, and the question naturally enough suggested itself to every one—'Where will be our home?' The common gaol, surrounded by a thorny fence, contained only two circular-shaped huts, and these, it was evident, would barely suffice to accommodate our two hundred fellow-prisoners, even if the fifty who occupied them on our arrival, had their vainly cherished hopes of liberation verified. Intently we watched the proceedings of the Chiefs, who, in undeviating order, handed their important charge over to the Amba authorities. Rulers of provinces who had unsuccessfully fought for their independence took the precedence; next followed hereditary Chiefs of districts; then obnoxious governors, suspected military commanders; and finally common rebels, thieves, murderers, and all sorts of rabble. The poor Frendjoj, as the lowest of the low, held by their chains, were last of all led through the rickety but well-guarded door. Liq Maquas Gedana Miriam, the commandant of the Amba, and a relation of the King, gave us a contemptuous glance, on being consigned to his care, and then hurried off with all the great Chiefs to announce to his drunken master that the prisoners were all landed, lodged, and safe in the gaol. It is said that there is no pleasure without an admixture of pain, and no sorrow without an ingredient of comfort. This experience taught us during our first night's residence in our new convict settlement. We were vexed and irritated that white men who had committed no offence should be condemned to herd with a lot of hardened native criminals, in the cold open air. The account, however, which the occupants of the house gave us next morning of their night's rest removed all soreness and heart-burning, and we were more than content to be ranked with the basest of King Theodorus's subjects.

"In the afternoon, the royal blacksmiths and their assistants came to the gaol, and began their pleasant task of hammering on the foot chains, which on the journey had been removed. Some of the old prisoners on the Amba had fetters both around the wrists and the ankles, which made us fear that this double torture would also be inflicted on the new batch of convicts. Our apprehensions were groundless. His Majesty had not yet entirely thrown off all restraints, and become that merciless fiend into which he degenerated a few months later. He had still a great part of the country, and a large army, whose fidelity he was loth to forfeit by any wanton acts of cruelty towards Chiefs, who, though they were prisoners, had many powerful friends and numerous adherents. It is true he might have been indulgent towards the incarcerated aristocrat and severe towards the plebeian, but as this would have proved an odious and questionable distinction, all, without regard to rank and crime, had the fetters wrenched off the wrists, and shackles fastened around the legs. The operation occupied three complete days, and even then the task would not have been accomplished, had not a band of volunteers aided the sweating royal blacksmiths,"

On November 25th, 1864, the King and his army quitted the environs of Magdala. Although the precautions habitually taken by the Governor and guards, indicated, that there would be no relaxation of the restraints and hardships to which the Captives were continually subject; there was some relief in the consciousness, that the presence of the hated tyrant had been withdrawn.

“The departure of the King removed the air of depression which had rested on our prison, and all looked, if not content, yet resigned. Condemned without law, and incarcerated without any hope of release, the majority of these victims of tyranny and oppression tried more or less, according to their means, to mitigate their hapless condition by procuring those comforts which their circumstances permitted. Thus, some immediately commenced building huts; others prepared the favourite hydromel. Here, sat a group busily engaged in mending their tattered rags, which the journey had not improved; and there, squatted a half-score, nimbly plying their fingers to unmat their bushy wigs, ere the detestable layer of butter glittered and sparkled on the stiff-twisted plaits. We tried to imitate the example of our companions; and whilst some procured materials to build huts where they might pass the day outside the prison, the rest, myself among the number, improvised an awning, which we attached to the eaves of the prison, and there, whiled away our time, in converse with Ethiopia’s most notorious vagabonds and ruffians.

“The daring character of the houseless criminals frightened the guards, and, after many consultations—for without counsels and joint responsibility, under the suspicious rule of Theodorus, nothing could be attempted—it was decided to erect another house for the night accommodation of the unsheltered and dangerous class, to which we belonged. With horror we saw the heaps of poles, sticks, and bamboos swell before our eyes. It was bad enough to be in the narrow compound of our uncovered, foul prison, but to be shut up in a close hut, and to be compelled to inhale a pestilential atmosphere, appeared to us the acme of misery. We spoke to our guards, and in most coaxing terms entreated them to exempt us from the horrors of the new dormitory. Two kindly promised to befriend us, but the rest justly remarked: ‘The Negroes charged us to guard your person, and not to watch over your health and comfort. If you die we shall not be blamed, but if you escape we lose our heads.’ It was of no use to represent to them that we had no wings to fly out of the Amba, nor claws to climb over perpendicular precipices; they dreaded our skill, and neither entreaties nor arguments were of any avail. In a week the house was finished, and a little before sunset all, not already domiciled, were driven pell mell into it.



"Our native companions and associates, in anticipation of a scramble, installed themselves in their different places early in the afternoon, long before the usual hour for muster; and the close quarters they occupied gave us a glimmer of hope that the densely-packed hut, which rendered every accession to its numbers impossible, would be more gracious to us than the guards. We were deceived. Crowded in every nook and corner, the eight Frendjoj, despite all protestations, had to squeeze themselves in among the heaving and fighting, the squabbling and shouting mass. We were now eighty-one prisoners, in a house scarcely large enough to accommodate, with anything approximating to comfort, a fourth part of that number. McKelvey, whom we emphatically designated '*L'enfant terrible*,' gave the key-note of a boisterous altercation. 'Tabaguee be Janehoi mout ('Guards, by the death of the King') give us a place where to lie.' The embarrassed watchmen did not dare to close their ears to such an adjuration, and indisposed as they appeared to be, they had to attend to the summons. 'Move your vile carcase, you murderer; get up, you rascally thief; draw up your knife-doomed legs, you cowardly deserter!' resounded far above the hum and din of the fettered throng, from the stentorian throats of half-a-dozen tabaguees, accompanied by the rattle of the long, knotty sticks, that fell discordantly on the chains and skulls of the unyielding, closely-wedged crowd. By dint of menace and blows, a small space was at last cleared, which enabled us to squat down. We had now to arrange the position in which we intended to sleep. This was indispensable, to obviate a disagreeable collision.

"Some thought, that rational beings invariably slept on the right side; others, on the contrary, maintained that since they first opened their eyes to the light of day, they had always slept on the left. A little discussion, however, settled this difficulty, and all unanimously agreed to follow the example of the majority. The intention was good, and had it merely depended on immobility, our comfortless nights might have glided on in perfect harmony. Unfortunately, now and then, one or the other got tired of that forced method of repose, and, forgetful of the conditions imposed, veered round and rolled on his angry, and sometimes half smothered and gasping neighbour. These incidents produced a little hilarity, but did not effectually mar our unity. Such, however, was not the result of an accidental encounter with the slumbering groups at our feet. Accustomed to a putrescent atmosphere, and indifferent about future contingencies, the poor fellows grunted and snored on their hard stone pillows as if they reposed on beds of down. Disgusted with the discordant noise and the crippling posture, the restless Frendjoj would now and then, to obtain a little comfort, stretch their limbs beyond the legitimate limit of five feet. Instantly there was a shout and a protest, the rattle of clanking fetters, and the sound of a hammering stone. Knocks and kicks, threats and abuse, in boisterous



confusion, reverberated through the dimly-lighted prison. In a few minutes, the shackled combatants were *hors de combat*, and, at the intercessions of friends, ready to conclude an armistice, which restricted the skull and feet of the belligerents within proper bounds, if not for ever, at least till dawn of day. A fortnight we had endured the horrors of this swarming, suffocating, and loathsome dormitory. During this interval we became intimate with most of the guards, which removed their apprehensions about our supernatural skill; and we obtained full permission to sleep under the awning outside the gaol. This favour was highly appreciated, and, when we had the means, substantially acknowledged. Our hours, days, and weeks, if not broken by an occasional squabble, or some other disagreeable exhibition, glided on in wearisome and unrelieved monotony.

“Like our native comrades, we often imagined that our shackles would speedily drop, our prison open, and the captive exile hasten away to freedom and home. The sanguine and imaginative Ethiopian, more than the cool, deliberate, and reflecting Frendjoj, was always building castles in the air. For months and months delightful sunny pictures, never, perhaps, to be realized, danced before his eyes. Suddenly, a whisper circulated through the crowded huts, which shaded every face, and imparted an air of desolation to the careworn, swarthy countenances. The messenger of evil had arrived, and, without any previous intimation, hint, or warning, the deluded ‘prisoners of hope’ were dragged away in dozens, and hurried—for the King’s behest must be promptly executed—shriftless and unprepared, into eternity. Frequently did I hear the guilty and innocent dilating, in glowing colours, on the future; when, lo! and behold! instead of thongs and poles to wrench off the heavy irons, there gleamed over their devoted heads the sword and spear—the symbols of their woeful doom. Such sad and harrowing sights damped the ardour of the courageous, and filled with dismay the timid.”

While the Captives were passing through these tribulations, other events occurred in Abyssinia, which excited the blood-thirsty vengeance of the tyrant, and were step by step undermining his authority in his own kingdom. His attack on the territory of the Wollo-Gallas, his indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants, and the unrelenting eagerness with which he laid waste the country, and burnt the villages, were all graphically described by Mr. Stern. Memilek, the heir-apparent to the throne of Shoa, had for some time been a prisoner at large in the Court of Abyssinia. He managed to effect his escape, and with considerable difficulty reached the territory of the Wollo-Gallas. In consequence of this, every Galla

prisoner at Magdala was slaughtered ; and had it not been for the remonstrances of the principal men, the Christian prisoners would have shared in the same fate. But the irritated monarch could not repress the angry passions which agitated his soul. The Aboona was at that time at Magdala, at which place Mr. Stern, it will be remembered, had offered if necessary to join him, when he was his own master. Theodorus saw, at this juncture, the Bishop seated quietly before his house. "Leaping out of his saddle, the infuriated Monarch sprang forward, and, with a quivering spear, confronted the calm and undaunted pontiff. 'Monk!' was the polite salutation, 'why did you not come out and absolve me?' 'I saw your face stained with blood,' was the laconic reply, 'and had no inclination to intrude on your presence.' The altercation grew every moment more loud and animated. The King called the Bishop 'traitor,' and the Bishop the King '*diabolos*.' Words led to threats, and threats almost to blows. Weary of the wordy strife, the brave and fearless Primate dashed aside his veil, and, baring his neck, summoned the executioner to execute the despot's fell design. Touched by the sight of their unshaken and death-court-ning Aboona, who stood before them like a venerated saint of the calendar, hurling heaven's wrath and judgment on scorning unbelievers ; the fickle and superstitious multitude, fresh from the field of slaughter, cast themselves before the Monarch and supplicated his clemency. Mute with surprise, the baffled tyrant, who expected to see a meek and not defiant churchman ; with affected scorn, said ; 'Well, since he wants to die, let him live ; but write down his property, and guard him.'

"Disgusted with the proud attitude of the Aboona, the irritated Monarch cast his vicious glance towards the gaol, where he knew he could, unopposed, extort tears of blood from the victims of his violence. Hitherto, most of the Magdala prisoners, ourselves among the number, had only fetters attached to their ankles ; but now, at the behest of his Majesty, the right hand was fastened by a chain about eight inches long, to the legs, and in this crippled and doubled-up posture, all the prisoners were condemned to spend, according to the tyrant's expectation, the remainder of the wretched days of their life."

The tempest which raged, fell again on the heads of the innocent Captives, and their life of woe became more burdensome and afflictive.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### ENGLISH SYMPATHY AND ENGLISH EFFORT.

The agitation and anxiety, which the first tidings of Mr. Stern's sufferings and imprisonment had occasioned, increased day by day. It was natural that his relatives, and those of the other prisoners, should appeal to the British Government, as the channel through which alone any effective steps might be taken for their deliverance. People who had lived in the East, and who were acquainted with those agencies by which Abyssinia had been reached and influenced in former years, were prolific in their advice and suggestions as to the means by which this might be now done. The Coptic Patriarch at Cairo—Bishop Gobat at Jerusalem—or others who had personal relations with King Theodorus, were spoken of as possessing the key, by which the door of deliverance might be opened. But as intelligence found its way through the well-guarded confines of the semi-barbarous country, to this and other lands, it became more and more evident that such agencies were powerless. The accounts which occasionally reached England, indicated, that from the hands of bandits, whose purpose might be moved by gold, there would be a greater possibility of delivering the Captives, than from the grasp of Theodorus of Abyssinia.

But as long as a gleam of light illumined the dark prospect, suggestions and efforts continued to be made. Among the most fervid and energetic were those of Dr. Beke, who had spent some years in Abyssinia, and had acquired considerable knowledge of the country and the people. He confidently believed, that, if sufficiently provided with the means of approaching the despot, so as to treat him with the

honour which he demanded, he would be enabled to obtain the pardon and release of the Captives. But he was at that time unconscious of the incalculable changes which had passed over the country. Had he and others known, how the once promising and autocratic Ruler, had become the most relentless and sanguinary barbarian, he would have understood, that all that he could expect, had he ventured into Abyssinia, would have been a share in the captivity and sufferings of others.

When, however, there seemed little probability of any active effort on the part of the British Government, the relatives and friends of the sufferers determined to appeal for help, in order that Dr. Beke might be enabled to enter upon this hazardous undertaking. More than two thousand pounds were contributed from various friends, suitable presents were prepared for Theodorus, and Dr. Beke prepared to take his departure on this most unpromising mission. He proceeded as far as Massowah, at which port Mr. Rassam, as we shall presently see, had already arrived; and had opened negotiations with Theodorus, for permission to enter Abyssinia. This barred the onward progress of Dr. Beke, and occasioned considerable disappointment. But "hope" never dies. Even under the most unfavourable circumstances, it is the cheering minister, who whispers, that out of the most impenetrable gloom light may arise. Many loving and anxious hearts, therefore, still looked upon this project, with confidence and sanguine expectation.

The days and weeks, as they passed, brought with them new counsels and new difficulties. The Secretariat at the Foreign Office were perplexed. They lived in the ambiguous hope, that by some preternatural event the enigma might be solved. This will be seen from the following *data*, which relate to the various official and personal efforts which were employed at that time.

The London Committee wrote as follows:—"It has appeared to the Committee, throughout these distressing proceedings, that, the conduct of King Theodorus being based upon political considerations with which our Government only could deal, they ought not to interfere by any independent action, so long as the Government were making all reasonable efforts to accomplish the liberation of the Captives. It has not always been practicable to ascertain the



exact state of things, though the Committee have from time to time received sufficient information to assure them, that the desired object had not been abandoned by Government. They have now been distinctly informed, through a letter from Earl Russell to their President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, that Mr. Rassam is instructed to proceed with his mission, King Theodorus having invited Mr. Rassam to visit him. The Committee feel that this being the case, it is their duty to hold back from any independent action, till the result of Mr. Rassam's mission is ascertained. If the measures of Government fail, such a result would place the whole question on totally different grounds. An independent appeal to the compassion of the King by a private agent, or such other measure as might be available, must then be resorted to."

Lord Shaftesbury had frequent communication with Earl Russell on the subject, and conveyed to him a petition from Mrs. Stern—"praying that Her Majesty the Queen might be graciously pleased to write to King Theodorus on behalf of the unfortunate Captives. Earl Russell stated that, after much consideration, he had come to the conclusion, that he ought not to advise the Queen to write to the King of Abyssinia; but gave the assurance that every possible means should be used to obtain the release of Mr. Stern and his fellow-prisoners." On the 28th of July (1865) "Mr. Purday, father-in-law to Mr. Stern, had an interview with the Committee, and laid before them a memorial to Earl Russell, which it was proposed should be signed by the relatives of all the Captives. To this the Committee saw no objection, and the petition was accordingly forwarded." These private negotiations, and attempts to carry out some policy, which might effect the greatly-desired result, were proceeding *pari-passu*, with the hesitating plans and irresolute projects of the Foreign Office. "Early in September, 1864, it was announced that Mr. Rassam, Her Majesty's Consul at Aden, was entrusted with the conveyance of a letter from Her Majesty the Queen, to the King of Abyssinia. On this mission, Mr. Rassam arrived at Massowah, on the Red Sea, about the 20th of August, 1864, and was detained there until the month of August, 1865, in daily expectation of receiving an invitation from the King to proceed to his Court, under the promise of a safe conduct, with Her

Majesty's letter. During his detention at Massowah, Mr. Rassam did not omit any effort to procure tidings of the Captives. In July, 1865,—following upon a discussion in Parliament,—the Government saw fit to nominate Mr. Palgrave on a Special Mission from the Queen to King Theodorus, with instructions to proceed to Abyssinia, *via* Egypt and Matamma, without interfering with Mr. Rassam's Mission. Renewed assurances were at the same time obtained from the Government, that the captive missionaries should not be forgotten."

On the 5th of September of the same year, it was announced in the public papers, and confirmed at the Foreign Office, that Consul Cameron had been liberated from his chains, and that Mr. Rassam had received an invitation from King Theodorus to proceed to his Court. It was added that Mr. Rassam was at Cairo awaiting instructions from Her Majesty's Government. In reply to Lord Shaftesbury, Earl Russell wrote on October 16th, that, as King Theodorus had invited Mr. Rassam to his Court, he had been ordered to proceed thither, Mr. Palgrave being directed to wait in Egypt, until his Lordship knew the result of Mr. Rassam's Mission.

It may be here observed, that both these gentlemen, with regard to whose mission this vacillating course was pursued by the Government, were persons of great ability, and possessing much diplomatic experience. Mr. Palgrave had been a great deal in the East, and had successfully accomplished some very hazardous journeys in Mahommedan countries. Mr. Rassam was also a person of great tact and experience, and necessarily well acquainted with the character and habits of the natives of Eastern lands. But in the eyes of most persons, Mr. Palgrave, being a European, had the advantage over Mr. Rassam, who was an Armenian by birth. It will sufficiently appear, how important it was at that juncture, that England should be represented by an Englishman, when the following extract from a letter received by Mrs. Stern, from the British Consul at Cairo, dated Sept. 27th, 1865, is given:—"I had been in hopes that I should have had the satisfaction to announce to you the departure of Mr. Palgrave for Abyssinia, through whom we had every confidence that the liberation of the Abyssinian captives would have been effected. Now, however, matters have taken

another course, by the sudden arrival of Mr. Rassam in Egypt, with the astounding announcement that the King had invited him to Gondar ; but the letter being neither sealed nor signed, it seems to me anything but a positive assurance that Mr. Rassam would be welcomed by the King. Mr. Rassam is, however, convinced that there can be no treachery in the matter, and has returned to Massowah, from whence he will start, the middle of next month, for Matamma and Abyssinia. I cannot conceal from you, that reports of a recent date, from the German Missionaries in those parts, to the Mission at Jerusalem, state, that the King was still loth to set poor Mr. Stern and Mr. Rosenthal free ; but said, if he received the answer from the English in a proper way, there would be no objection to set Stern free. Hence I regret much that Mr. Palgrave has not been allowed to proceed on his journey. I still hope, however, that the last reports sent home, will induce the Government to re-order Mr. Palgrave to proceed, for there is no doubt the King feels hurt that an Englishman was not entrusted with the Queen's letter. I must, however, say, that Mr. Rassam feels confident that when he is received by the King, he will effect the release of Mr. Stern and Mr. Rosenthal." However, Mr. Rassam proceeded, according to his instructions, to Massowah ; there, as events showed, to await for more than a year, the solicited safe-conduct of the despot to enter his dominions.

Letters from Mr. Stern, and the other prisoners, found their way to the coast at long intervals. The services of persons had been secured, who, doubtless encouraged by the liberal rewards which they received, were willing to encounter the risks connected with the conveyance of these letters to Massowah.

A long letter, painfully interesting, and containing a confirmation of all the distressing incidents already narrated, was addressed to his beloved wife, from Amba Magdala, in April, 1865.

"My dear Charlotte,—As there is just now an opportunity of sending to Massowah, I hasten to write, as I know from my own feelings how anxious you must be to receive tidings. Little did you or I anticipate, that sad morning, when a gloomy foreboding allowed you only to utter a faltering 'God bless you,' that our separation would be so long. Months ago, my sufferings and imprisonment might have terminated, had not always some fresh and un-

toward event occurred to frustrate my hopes. The only comfort in all the afflictions that have been my lot for nearly nineteen months, is the consciousness that ever since a gracious Providence directed my wandering steps to this country, I have only sought the welfare of souls and the glory of the Redeemer. My object was, of course, grossly misrepresented; and I believe that, next to the members of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, King Theodorus considered me the greatest miscreant that ever breathed the free air of heaven.

“ But I must not be prodigal with the limited quantity of paper at my disposal, nor dare to be diffusive in my statements, without attracting the eyes of the guards; therefore, I simply jot down the chief points connected with my own and fellow-prisoners' painful history. You are aware that in the beginning of April, 1863, I reached Abyssinia. Our mission, though restricted in its operations, was then most prosperous; and, despite obstacles, I cherished the most hallowed anticipations respecting the future. In June, Captain Cameron, H. B. Majesty's Consul, arrived a second time at our station at Genda. The King, who had been at some distance, also quite accidentally came into our neighbourhood. During his stay in our vicinity, I heard several times that he was annoyed, that Captain Cameron had not brought an answer to his letter to the British Government, and also for having gone round the frontier, and formed, as was falsely represented, prejudicial intimacies with his enemies, the Turks. Against us and our mission I also heard unfavourable reports; and as I knew the priests were opposed to us and our work, I communicated my fears to my fellow-labourers, and all agreed not to incur any expense, except what was indispensably necessary for the support of Schools, Scripture-readers, and the extensive circulation of the Word of God. Not expecting violence or forcible detention, even under the most adverse circumstances, I visited the Falashas of various districts: and at the end of August, accompanied by Cornelius, I set out for Armatgioho, a province well inhabited by Falashas, who had never seen a missionary or heard the tidings of Redeeming love. About the 20th of September I came back to Genda, and on the evening of my return a royal order summoned the British Consul, all the missionary agents, and myself, to Gondar, to hear the reading of the letter which Mons. Bardel had brought from the Emperor of the French. All obeyed the behest, and on the morning of the 2nd October (I think the dates may not be quite correct), the despatch was publicly read, and the fictitious interview between Mons. Bardel and Napoleon III. narrated before the small European colony. The King was exceedingly dissatisfied with the letter and the reception of his messenger, and I know that Mons. Lejean, the French Consul, might still have kept us company, had not Aboona Salama arrested the King's violence, and gained him permission to leave. Mons. Lejean and Mons. Legard, a French physician, were peremptorily required to quit Abyssinia, and the rest returned to their respective homes.

The crisis, which for some time had been looming in the distance, was now drawing nearer and nearer. All felt that there was something impending, but even the most timid dreaded nothing beyond the seizure of property and expulsion from the country. My own work being finished, I purchased the requisite number of animals, and started for the coast. On my way I had to re-pass Gondar, where the King was still with his army. The Metropolitan, with wonted kindness, invited me to his residence, an offer which I gratefully accepted. I reached Gondar on Thursday, and on Saturday I intended to pay my salaam to his Majesty. Unfortunately, before I could secure a *baldara'a*, or introducer, the King unexpectedly set out on an expedition against a rebel. I remained at Gondar till Tuesday, and then bade a final adieu to the Bishop and other friends, and quitted, as I thought for ever, the capital of Abyssinia. Captain Cameron, and also the Frenchman Bardel, accompanied me about two hours on my road, and then shook hands and parted. My people as well as myself were in the happiest mood, a feeling which even our animals seemed to share, for they marched with ease along the shelving path and ever dizzying precipices up to the plain of Woggera. Here, to my surprise, I saw the King's white tent glittering in the sun's rays on one of the heights which dot the plateau. Duty, as well as courtesy, forbade me to advance without saluting His Majesty. This induced me to halt, and towards the afternoon I proceeded, accompanied by two of my servants, of whom one spoke a little Arabic, to the royal camping ground. After waiting about two hours, His Majesty came into the open air. Myself and attendants immediately made a most humble obeisance. There was a frown on the King's countenance, which augured nothing auspicious. Between the first question and the death of my two servants, the hand of time could not have advanced ten minutes. The gloom of approaching night, the rattling of the sticks, and my own doubtful fate, prompted me to put my hand mechanically to my lips, or, as it was said, to put a finger into my mouth. This was construed into a crime, and in less time than these words take to pen, I was stript, beaten, and lay almost lifeless on the ground. Wounded, bruised, and bleeding, my executioners dragged, or rather carried me down the hill, where my swollen wrist was fastened by a hoop and a chain to the arm of a soldier. My guardian, moved with compassion, tried with rank grass to stanch the blood, which profusely welled out of more than a score of gashes and scars; but finding the effort useless, he wrapt himself in his shama, and with my spectral form clinging to him, fell asleep. I also sank several times into a feverish stupor, and oh! how gladly would I have passed the wearisome hours of night in forgetfulness, had not the shifting motion of blood in my mouth and throat denied me this indulgence. In sighs, groans, and excruciating agonies the night waned, and the beautiful stars, unconscious of mortal woes, glittered with wonted brightness in the



eastern horizon. At daylight I was given into the charge of several Chiefs, whilst the King moved on to Gondar. The villagers, as also my guards, showed me much sympathy, and like the good Samaritan, they washed my wounds, and brought me an abundance of milk, the only nourishment my inflamed lips and gums allowed me to swallow down. Mid-day, my servants, strongly guarded, were conducted to my temporary prison, and never shall I forget the shrieks, lamentations, and agonizing contortions which the sight of their afflicted master occasioned. Orders had been sent that I should have foot and hand-fetters, but as my ankles were too much inflamed for the hoops, they transgressed the royal command, and only tied my left hand to my right ankle. The next day a detachment of troops came to escort me and my servants to Gondar. I was now treated as a regular criminal; in fact, my position became so painful, and my physical suffering so intense, that I looked for death as a happy release. The abject condition to which I had been reduced, softened even the flinty hearts of my guards, and amidst words of comfort and hope, they told me in whispering breath, that my intimacy with the Bishop, and the report that he had sold the Church lands to me and the British Consul, were the cause of my misfortune; and that it might have fared worse with me had I passed the royal camp, as arrangements had already been made for my arrest. Loss of blood and want of food, beyond a few biscuits, brought on a melancholy and a depression of spirits, which language cannot depict. On the fourth day (I believe), Mr. Flad, Mons. Bardel, Samuel (a convert of Bishop Gobat), and two officers of the royal household, came to inspect my luggage, as I was suspected of having letters from the Bishop or Captain Cameron."

The letter concluded with a paragraph as follows:—

"The foregoing is a hasty, brief, and unvarnished statement of facts, which you will kindly communicate to Mr. Goodhart, for the information of all who sympathize with me and my fellow-prisoners. On a future occasion, if I get paper, I shall furnish you with an account of our subsequent career of sufferings, viz.: Messages from the King—Fresh hatred against me—Awful passage of Scripture—Warning to me and Rosenthal before suspected execution—Full and complete pardon to R. and myself—Release of Flad and the other missionary agents—Mons. Bardel's return from Kassala—Imprisonment—Royal message that he was the cause of all our troubles—Release of Rosenthal from his fetters—Controversy about religious fasts between the King and myself—Reckless temerity in quoting Isaiah lviii.—Public interview between the Metropolitan and myself—Refusal to incriminate him—Torture with ropes—Royal message, 'I know you are not afraid to die, but I shall not kill you; on the contrary, I shall at regular intervals torture you (*i.e.* myself), till the flesh falls in rotten pieces from your body'—Second night's more frightful torture—Finally, removal of all the prisoners to Amba

Magdala. These and the former facts, if fully delineated, would form a book of real horrors, far stronger than the most improbable and terrifying fiction. God bless you all."

In another letter, addressed to the Secretary of the London Society, and dated May 30th, 1865, Mr. Stern wrote thus:—

"As there is a messenger leaving for Massowah, I creep into my lair, and hidden under my shama, scribble a few lines. Had I paper, I would have continued the sad history of our trials and troubles; but, unfortunately, I do not possess more than this slip (half a sheet of large note paper). I must therefore wait until our friends supply us with a few sheets. Our position since my last has undergone no change. Day after day comes to its close in the usual painful or reckless monotony of savage life. Sometimes tidings reach us which afford a thrill of joy, and perhaps for a week we ruminate on freedom and the blessings of civilized life; and then again the vision of hope becomes damped, and the soul either seeks comfort and consolation in God and His Word, or sinks into the wonted state of apathy. I firmly believe that our Heavenly Father will yet deliver us, and without wearying my mind with speculations whether this is to be effected by internal political changes (a topic on which I will not dilate), or by external pressure, I patiently leave all in the hands of Him who shapes events to further His divine and holy purpose. At present we are daily anticipating the beginning of the rainy season; last year we dreaded the winter; but He who in mercy preserved us in times past, will also graciously watch over us in the time to come. As I am reminded of the approach of winter, I will give you a hasty sketch of the place, where we and upwards of two hundred unhappy natives, of all ranks and conditions may have to pass the ensuing inclement season. Just picture to your imagination an isolated locality, rising out of the midst of a jumble of conical hills, deep ravines, and serrated ridges, and you have Amba Magdala. On the summit there are clusters of thatched huts, occupied by about 1,000 troops. Not far from the Church, which you recognize by an apex surmounted by a glittering cross, you gaze on a mass of wretched hovels that stand in mocking contrast around four spacious circular dwellings; you approach a few steps nearer, and you behold a strong thorn fence guarded by groups of sooty soldiers, close to whom lie basking in the sun bands of unfortunates loaded with galling fetters. This is the royal prison. Those wretched huts outside the enclosure are occupied by the *élite* of the prisoners during the day; but towards evening all must repair within the fence, where, after being counted, they are driven like wild beasts within the reeking walls of those conically-shaped structures. Insects, and all that is repulsive of whatever name or colour, swarm in these gaols; and really, if Providence had not tempered human nature so as to render it capable of enduring every hardship, I believe even few Abyssinians would long resist

the fatal influence of this poisonous atmosphere. By special favour we are allowed to make our abode close to the walls of one of these houses; and there, under a black woollen awning, Captain Cameron, Rosenthal, Makerer, and myself pass the day and night, and the rest, who have huts outside, only the night.

"Please remember me and my fellow-prisoners at the Throne of Grace. Kindly forward a copy of this to Mrs. Stern, with my love to her and the dear children."

The 11th of October brought to Mrs. Stern another letter, dated, Amba Magdala, July 13th, 1865. It will be seen, that at that time, the information had reached the prisoners that Mr. Rassam had arrived at Massowah. This probably had a favourable effect upon the guards, and upon the messengers who were covertly employed to convey letters to the coast.

"My dear Charlotte,—As Captain Cameron is sending to Massowah, I scribble a line to say that we are still in prison and fetters. We anticipated that Mr. Rassam, Her Majesty's agent at Massowah, would, by his friendly and conciliatory letters to the King, ere this have appeased his offended pride, and obtained our release from these galling chains. Our anticipations have, however, to our grief, not been realized; and we must still, for some time, be patient and prayerful expectants of coming deliverance.

"His Majesty, about ten days ago, wrote to Mr. Rassam to come to Abyssinia; and his advent, and the delivery of the Queen's letter, we believe, may possibly effect our liberation.

"Just now, everything here is in a transition state; and it is quite impossible to prognosticate the events of the ensuing few months, or even weeks. A general undisguised presentiment of a change, is evinced in the open revolt of all the important provinces. And relentless despotism may soon experience a terrible retribution. My own, and most of my fellow-prisoners' misfortunes, may, to a great extent, be attributed to the crafty insinuations and insidious malice of godless, unprincipled men; who in the ruin of others sought to attain their own nefarious and selfish ends. I do not, however, despair or despond. To-day I have been in chains twenty-one months (now two years), and although during that long heart-wasting existence I have had to submit to fiendish tortures, and more than once have been obliged to face (apparently) a cruel death, yet I enjoy an infinite satisfaction in the consciousness, that by an inflexible Christian firmness I saved others, and won influential friends to the cause of Missions in Abyssinia. His Majesty, since our arrival here, has not favoured us even with an *en passant* enquiry. Placed on a level with murderers, robbers, and other great criminals, our days have rolled on in the usual sad monotony of savage prison life. Within the last few days we have, however,

again experienced something of His Majesty's feelings against the white prisoners. The cause of this fresh outburst of indignation is utterly unconnected with our affairs. On the night of the 1st inst., Menilek, the Crown Prince of Shoa, and son-in-law to the Negoos Theodoros, unexpectedly quitted the royal camp, and, accompanied by his followers (but not by his young wife), fled to his own country. The King, irritated at the desertion of another powerful prop of his throne, next morning executed all the Galla prisoners; then quarrelled with the Bishop; and at last his chafed spirit vented itself on all his Christian prisoners, by giving them foot, as well as hand-chains. This art of tormenting (which is ascribed to the wise King of Israel) is a most cruel invention, particularly when, as in our case, the fetters are so short, that one is actually bent double and unable to move about by day, or to stretch one's weary limbs by night. There is a report that we are to be released from these abominable hand-shackles; I shall be thankful if it proves to be true, as the stooping attitude affects my head, and causes great pain in the spine.

"I intended to continue the narrative of our troubles, but I have not a sufficient quantity of paper. We expect messengers with provisions, clothing, paper, &c., from Massowah; and on their return, I shall send you a long but very sad letter. God bless you all.

"I am, your affectionate husband,

"HENRY A. STERN."

The captivity and sufferings of the Missionaries might have occasioned but little concern without the circle of their relatives, and those interested in the Mission; and an occasional paragraph in the daily papers might have sufficed to convey to the public such a measure of information as so unimportant a subject would need. But a Consul of Her Britannic Majesty was among the prisoners, and a sharer in the indignities to which the Missionaries were exposed. This sufficed to give it importance in the eyes of the Continental press, and necessarily to give it marked prominence in the leading journals of our own country. The Government had its apologists, and there were a few who did their best to exculpate the Foreign Office from the neglect which was laid to its charge. But the general tone of the English press was decisive in its condemnation, and such documentary evidence as was allowed to see the light, confirmed every serious imputation with which the Officials were loaded. With merciless particularity the history of the past was explained and exposed, and the attempts at refutation were feeble and garbled. Two of the most able lawyers of the day—Sir

Hugh Cairns (afterwards Earl Cairns) in the House of Commons—and Lord Chelmsford (ex-Lord Chancellor) in the House of Lords—made it the theme of some of their most forcible speeches. The clear and judicial mind of these eminent jurists, analyzed all the salient points of the official documents which were accessible; and exposed in convincing terms the evils, of which official incompetence and procrastination had been productive. It was in vain that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs endeavoured, most ungenerously, to affix blame on Consul Cameron. The conclusion was inevitable, that he had not acted beyond his instructions, and that had his repeated applications for some acknowledgment of the King's letter been responded to, no difficulty would ever have arisen. Nor is it unimportant to observe, that during all the Parliamentary and public discussions which these events occasioned, no official ever ventured in any way to assail the conduct or demeanour of the Missionaries, who had been the chief sufferers. Throughout the whole of those years of labour which preceded, and the suffering which followed, the outburst of royal intolerance, their line of action, and their forbearance under the most irritating provocations, had been above blame and reproach. We must always be prepared for unfavourable comments from the ungodly and the hypocritical, on Missionary work in general, and Missionaries in particular. Such persons were not slow at this juncture to insinuate, that to the Missionaries were to be imputed the complications which arose in Abyssinia, and the subsequent cost which the military expedition occasioned. Imputations of this kind are unworthy of notice, inasmuch as every authoritative document established the fact, that they were the aggrieved and suffering victims, of the incapacity and neglect of others.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### SICKNESS AND DEATH.

A tedious and embarrassing year had passed, since Mr. Rassam landed at Massowah. No attempt at advance into the interior had during that time been made by him, and the entry of other Europeans into Abyssinia was strictly prohibited. He waited for a safe-conduct from Theodorus, and this safe-conduct repeated applications failed to procure. It will always remain a matter of speculation, whether a bolder course would not have accomplished more satisfactory results. A semi-barbarian always pays homage, to the courage which claims a right, rather than to the timidity which asks a favour.

The reports of these negotiations found their way into the prison-enclosures. They were garbled and distorted. At times they were on the very borders of success, at other times they were indicative of inevitable failure. The experience which the Captives had passed through, and their knowledge of the despot's character and of the intrigues which beset his court, prepared them for the worst. But their confidence in the protecting care of their Almighty Friend was the sheet-anchor which never drifted ; and while they were day by day prepared for any calamity, they were "strong in faith, giving glory to God."

The gravest diseases and epidemics invaded the camp and the prison, and carried off prisoners as well as guards. Mr. Stern and his companions in suffering did not escape illness in many forms ; but "the pestilence that walketh in darkness," and "the destruction



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that wasteth at noon-day," harmed them not. To the sick and the dying they ministered; and the medicines, of which they had a small supply, were the instruments of healing to many of the afflicted, and elicited blessings from many a scornful lip.

"Death, the dreaded enemy of the happy and gay, and the friend of the sorrowful and sad, almost disdained the putrescent gaol, where his visits, if not courted, would not have been unwelcome. We had a little sickness, and a few deaths; but each one, wrapt in profound reflection on his own woes, almost unconsciously became indifferent to the woes of others. Each week, perhaps, one died. The funeral obsequies occupied very little time, and excited very little attention. Freed from the toils and troubles of a harrowing life, the miserable sufferer had scarcely gasped forth his last breath, when half-a-dozen of his fellow-captives lifted up his shackled and still quivering corpse, and laid it on the bare ground under the prison eaves. The same kind hands, guarded by gaolers, dug, at some distance from the prison-compound, a hurried grave, whilst others wrenched the fetters from the stiffening and iron-wasted limbs. In about an hour all was over. One or two, to whom the departed was dear, shed a silent tear over his mortal remains, and then, without a ministering priest to say, in solemn voice, 'dust to dust, and ashes to ashes,' the corpse was put into the ground, the clods were rolled over it, and he had ceased to be numbered among the victims of King Theodorus's tyranny.

"A sudden outbreak of an epidemic, which prostrated its scores, unlike an isolated death, produced a solemnizing, but not, what might have been expected, a desponding effect. Death to most had lost its sting, and his approach was regarded with sullen indifference, if not with gloomy satisfaction. In autumn, 1865, numbers of our fellow-prisoners were attacked by that terrible scourge, the small-pox. The groans, shrieks, and lamentations of the sick and dying wrung every heart with anguish and grief. Removed from friends and relations, whose tender care and assiduity might have assuaged the pangs of disease and the agonies of dissolution, the shackled and afflicted sufferers without exception refused to accept the sympathy and attention which charity proffered; and, in mournful and pleading accents, they entreated to be allowed to have a peaceable, and not, as they prophetically anticipated, a forcible exit out of this world."

The saddening event which cast its darkest shadow over the chequered life of the prison-home, was the death of the little son of Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal. The recital of this distressing circumstance, is given in Mr. Stern's own touching and expressive narration.

“It was at this very period, when our prison-life was so even and uniform, that death entered our small circle, and created a painful gap. Little Henry Rosenthal, endeared to every one on account of his innocence, infantine beauty, and sweet disposition, suddenly quitted the narrow confines of an African prison for the glorious mansions of the redeemed. The young pilgrim, whose short sojourn in this lower world had been fraught with trials, which, happily, seldom fall to the lot even of the beloved ones of missionaries in the most unexplored and ungenial climes, seemed destined to brighten for a short period the dismal life of his father and mother, and then departed for ever.

“Born a few months before his parents’ imprisonment, the tender creature just began to be conscious of a mother’s loving smile, when, driven from house and home, he had to feed on tears, and to repose on a bosom often, very often, throbbing with the anguish of a breaking heart. Like some tender plant, he gathered strength during an interval of calm, and pined whenever there was a storm.

“After the departure of the King from Magdala, all the prisoners began to breathe a freer and more invigorating atmosphere. Little Henry, in the placid countenance of an affectionate mother, intuitively perceived that something auspicious had occurred. Better clad, better fed, more of cheerfulness and less of sadness around him, like a bird released from a cruel cage, he was always in motion, running, unhindered by guards, from one white prisoner to another, with a gaiety and playfulness as if he had suddenly been transported from the land where the eye is never dry, to a scene where weeping is unknown. Shy, and possessing an innate repugnance towards natives, he yet soon became reconciled to the youthful criminals, who, in the absence of other play-companions, led him round the prison enclosure, rolling about a worsted ball, or plaiting straw grasses, which sprang up here and there despite the tramp of countless feet. Several times he also moved beyond the limits of our gaol, and, by special request, visited the mother of Ras Ali, the late ruler of the Amhara country, and also Aboona Salama. The latter, to win the affections of his youthful visitor, offered him glittering watches, crosses, and a variety of attractive objects; but he gazed upon all with an indifferent glance, as if those gaudy trinkets were unsuited to the child of imprisoned parents. The kind-hearted Bishop, on observing this unusual indifference to all these gay and fascinating articles, remarked to his guide—a soldier and a sincere Christian man: ‘This child bears the impress of heaven, and will not continue long upon earth.’

“About the beginning of December, 1865, his rosy cheeks began to pale, and a sombre shade—the herald of death—overspread his ever-beaming countenance. He now no longer quitted the tent, or enlivened by his merry laughter the gloomy court of our prison. Two days before his decease, just as a few of us had finished our



usual morning devotions, a piercing shriek summoned me to the abode of my fellow-captive. The infant sufferer was then panting and gasping for breath, whilst his deep blue eyes, in mournful glances, wandered from one to the other, as if imploring help and relief. I prayed, with the deeply-afflicted parents, that if the beloved object of their affection was to be removed, the struggle might be short. That prayer, like many others, as perhaps eternity will reveal, which was sighed out in agonies and tears in that doleful spot, by one and the other of the sorely-tried white prisoners, was heard, and the spasms, that tore and racked that frail frame, ceased. In the evening, as was his custom, he folded his tiny hands together, and, raising his eyes solemnly to that spirit-land where the songs of infinite love, and not the clang of fetters, are heard; he devoutly followed every word, as if he understood the import of that prayer in which a mother's grief-wrung heart sought comfort and support. The next day he appeared more animated, but during the night he had a relapse, and ere the morning dawned, his eyes were closed to earth, and earth's pains and woes.

“The bereaved parents, deprived of all that had tempered the severity of their misery, lay forlorn and desolate on the hard ground of their prison, bemoaning the loss of their first-born. With our left hands (the right hand being manacled), McKelvey and myself dressed the corpse in white; and, with the aid of some native fellow-prisoners, made a small coffin of reeds, which the Bishop kindly sent us. The grave was dug on an acclivity close to our gaol, and to this spot with tottering steps we followed the first and youngest victim of our captivity, to his final resting-place. All the guards, and scores of women, had assembled around the grave; and, amidst the wails and sobs of the multitude, to whom the sweet child had endeared himself, I performed, crippled and bent double by heavy shackles, the touching funeral service of our Church. A month later, a fresh tomb had to be raised by the side of the departed, for his little sister; and once more, amidst the rattle of chains and the prayer of hope, was the earth heaped over the second white child's grave, on this sterile and isolated Amba.

“The spot where the two children lie interred, is marked by a tombstone, two feet high, with the inscription: ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.’

“We had a few trifling medicines, and these we husbanded most carefully. My own laboratory contained paste of colocynth, opium, and tartar emetic. The selection, if not very choice, was, at least, very potent. Not accustomed to dabble in the healing art, I made experiments on myself ere I tampered with the health of others. My colocynth pills obtained a fame at Magdala, that Morison and Holloway might have envied. In-door and out-door patients applied for that wonderful specific against all diseases. I

had no objection to part with my pills, but a decided objection to manufacture them. Kerans, who, I believe, had imbibed a profound knowledge of the pill-manipulating process beneath the parental roof, occasionally came to my help; and, after we had fabricated two or three dozens, which occupied about an hour; our hands, and sometimes our faces too, looked frightfully impressed with our profession.

“If I devoted myself to the healing of internal complaints, Kerans applied himself to alleviate external pains. The Abyssinians, although favoured with good grinders, are not entirely exempt from tooth-ache. Many constantly applied to us for relief. At first we were nervous in our practice, as we had no royal diploma; and without such a high sanction, it was not advisable to incur the risk of a misrepresentation, which a disappointed patient might perchance fabricate against us. This diffidence speedily wore away, and, encouraged by a few incipient successes, we unflinchingly pursued our healing art. Kerans and his forceps, Makerer and his sulphate of zinc, and myself with the eternal colocynth, were inseparables. My pills, as already stated, did wonders; but they were altogether eclipsed by the miracles performed by my two companions. Fellows, with eyes glued together as if they were hermetically sealed, had only to submit to Makerer’s patent phial, and in three or four days they were cured. Others, with faces swollen, swathed, and dreadfully woe-begone; needed only a touch of Kerans’ forceps, then there was a loud crack, a gory tooth, a stream of blood, a polite prostration, and, what was most welcome, a farewell to pain. They had all implicit faith in the skill of the dentist; and no one, that I recollect, would ever push away his arm, or hoist him down from the heaving chest, till the operation was accomplished. These acts of kindness procured us friends; and we enjoyed privileges which, during our second captivity, when we were in what the King termed his elfin, or harem, handsome largesses could not have purchased.”

Mr. Stern and Consul Cameron suffered most from pains in the spine, brought about by the crippled position which the hand-and-foot shackles necessitated. Had they not contrived a plan by which they were enabled to open the wrist-shackles by night, and close them again at early dawn, they would probably have never again been able to stand upright. While Mr. Stern had the heaviest shackles on his legs, he had the lightest, and most easily opened, around his wrists. And this distinguishing favour he owed to the gift of a Gospel in Amharic, which he had some time before given to his jailor. The vermin which infested the fœtid camp, and the rats which swarmed at night, were sources of indescribable

annoyance. Amidst such discomforts as these—chained and bound—and with painful apprehensions respecting the increased sorrows which each succeeding day might introduce, the afflicted servants of God, spent weeks and months of weariness and distress.

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### THE BRITISH EMBASSY.

Light had riven the dark and lowering clouds. Uncertainty had been succeeded by reality. No longer were the expectations and hopes of the Captives tantalized by mere idle rumours. The Representative of Great Britain had reached Abyssinian territory. Mr. Rassam had arrived at Gondar, and the intimation had been made known at the prison-house, that the Captives were to be freed.

On the morning of Feb. 24th, 1866, Agha Faree Gholam, with other officials, arrived at Magdala, bearing this happy intelligence. In the afternoon of that day, Consul Cameron and Mr. Stern were first summoned into the presence of the Chiefs, who held supreme command at Magdala. The other European prisoners followed in due order. Then the royal messenger, addressing them, said: "The King, my master, has charged me to inform you, that he has received a letter from your Queen, through her Envoy, Mr. Rassam, and that in conformity with the request embodied in the same, he has been pleased to order your liberation." Although still shackled with hand and foot chains, the Captives managed to prostrate themselves, in acknowledgment of this act of royal clemency. The poles and wedges which were employed in wrenching off their fetters inflicted many a wound; but who, wrote Mr. Stern, "cared for physical pain, when the illusive visions of liberty, friends, and home, floated before the enraptured eye. 'Our gait,' on the removal of the fetters, resembled that of a thoroughly drunken man. We staggered, reeled, and sank down. All was swimming before

the eyes, or moving beneath the feet. To make a regular firm step was beyond the reach of possibility. We walked on air. Each one, as the shackles dropped from his limbs, was gently supported by two or three kind friends; but notwithstanding every effort, the frame was too light and the head too giddy, to maintain the equilibrium, and we rolled towards Ras Gedana Miriam's house, more like revellers from a scene of debauch, than prisoners released from their shackles."

The announcement of their liberation was repeated; and on the 27th of the same month the royal messenger, at the head of a considerable detachment of the Magdala garrison, proceeded to escort the rejoicing freed-men on their way. On approaching Gaffat, the information which reached them was very discouraging. The orders respecting their march were most conflicting, and impressed the minds of the Missionaries with the apprehension, that the despot was practising his old arts of guile and treachery. It was said, that he was about to build a fleet, under the superintendence of Mr. Rassam, in order to navigate Lake Tzana. The vigilance with which the Europeans were watched by the soldiery, confirmed their fears, and was in itself an evidence, that they could not yet count upon their freedom.

Mr. Rassam and his companions were encamped near Quarata. The traitor, Samuel, had been appointed by the King, to be his *balदारaba*, or introducer. The Envoy had received a very flattering reception from Theodorus, who had directed his attendants to treat him with the utmost honour. Provisions of every kind, extorted from the unfortunate peasantry, flowed in abundance into the ambassadorial camp; and Mr. Rassam was greatly impressed with the apparent sincerity and courtesy of his sable host. The King was encamped on the southern extremity of Lake Tzana, and the British Envoy on the eastern shore. Frequent communication passed between them. A trial of the prisoners was ordered by Theodorus, in order that he might, in the presence of Mr. Rassam, attempt to establish the justice of his past proceedings. The foolish and unfounded charges made against the Missionaries were repeated, as well as the complaint that Consul Cameron had been unfaithful to his trust, in not obtaining a reply to the letter which



he had written to the Queen of England. M. Bardel received the more just condemnation for his duplicity and prevarication. As a matter of form, each of the offenders was required to own the truth of the charges made against him, in order that the royal clemency might with propriety be exercised. The crafty Monarch pretended to be delighted with the result of the trial, and in language becoming his character, sent a message as follows :—"My children, I am full of gratitude for what you have done. Come to me, and I will kiss your hands and feet."

The King now pretended to order the preparation of suitable presents, of which Mr. Rassam was to be the bearer, to Queen Victoria. Then a seal was to be engraved, in which should be inserted the claims of Theodorus to descent from Solomon, which seal was to be employed in giving dignity to the gifts, with which the emancipated Captives were to be laden. But days and weeks passed on, and the artist, in whose hands this important work was placed, failed to bring it to perfection. It was impossible, with any degree of reason, to account for this prolonged delay. The lesson of patient resignation had been too indelibly engraved upon the hearts of those who had so long lived on the threshold of eternity, to occasion much irritation. They watched with anxiety and doubt all that was passing around them: they heard with trepidation of the frequent councils which were held between the King and his Chiefs; and, notwithstanding the presence of the British Envoy, they became more and more convinced of the existence of deep-laid treachery. The seizure of a packet of letters which had been despatched to the coast, and which had been re-delivered to Mr. Rassam, portended no friendly relations between the tyrant and his unwilling guests.

"Our anxiety increased in intensity as the days multiplied. At length, on the morning of April 11th, (1866), Agha Faree Gholam; Lidj Abitou, a Belessa Chief; Kasai, his friend, and a few other stars of lesser magnitude, made their appearance in the mission camp with orders for our departure. This was the most surprising and agreeable intelligence we had received since our misfortunes. With alacrity we hastened to make the few necessary preparations for our journey. Mr. Rassam and his two companions were not to start with us. They were the dear friends of the King; and, as such, the Negoos could not allow them to leave without a parting interview. The rest, as Samuel designated them, were 'dirt,' and not worthy

to behold the glorious countenance of his Majesty, a privation for which we knew how to console ourselves. Agha Farce Gholam, our uncouth, semi-negro friend, did not share in the satisfaction which prevailed in our small camp. There was a forbidding leer in that one glittering eye, which the small-pox had most ungenerously left him, to fill up, I presume, the black catalogue of pillage and murder entrusted to him by his worthy master, that caused me a pang whenever I glanced at him. He had swallowed down substantial pieces of quivering broudo, drained many a berrile of potent arackee and tedj, and still his spirits were below zero. It could not be an evil conscience that was at work within him; for a man like him, whose very garments were drenched in blood, could not have much of a conscience; and even if he had, it was torpid, or altogether in abeyance. I had no tedj or arackee to offer him; but, instead of these delicacies, for which most Abyssinians will sell their souls, I almost drowned him in excellent coffee. The genial beverage did not melt the ice of his soul, nor loose the strings of his tongue. He was sullen, morose, and unsociable. There was something on his heart which evidently troubled and perplexed him. He had a kind of doggish affection for some of us, partly on account of the presents he had received, and also partly on account of the kindness and courtesy he had invariably experienced; and this rendered his taciturnity still more suspicious. Several times I tried to worm out the secret, by questioning him, in a most coaxing tone, about our journey; but, like one of those ugly, squatting, Indian idols, he sat motionless and mute. Once only, in reply to a dubious wish that he might be the chief of our escort, did he yawn forth, in croaking accents, 'Koi, Koi' (wait, wait). He knew that a detachment of royal troops was on the road to seize us, and very likely the secret would not have remained enshrined in his black bosom, had he not justly dreaded the consequences it might involve. In the afternoon, a grand council was convoked at Quarata, which was attended by all the magnates of the place. Samuel was one of the wise men who constituted that conclave, and it does not reflect much credit on the ungrateful courtier, that a cowardly fear deterred him from warning his new master, Mr. Rassam, of our coming troubles.

"The following morning, which was to consummate our Abyssinian exodus, we hailed with joy and delight. Mr. Rassam, his companions, and the European workmen, at sunrise embarked in a small fleet of bulrush boats for the royal camp, and about two hours afterwards, the late Magdala Captives, the three missionaries, and two hunters on parole at Gaffat, in high glee, sprang into their saddles and trotted away. Our road lay across rough and uneven paths lined with stinging nettles, and broken by dried-up canals and deep ruts. This, however, we did not notice: our excited imaginations tinted every object with lovely colours, and we stumbled over holes and ditches, brushed along weeds and bushes, in the

delirium of a most ecstatic dream. Our guards never flagged in their vigilance. They were in the rear and in the front, on the right and the left; in fact, wherever we wandered, there they hovered around us.

“After all, we had misunderstood Theodorus. Did not the very attentions of the guards prove that the reconciliation, at least on his part, was quite sincere? Did not those watchful eyes, that gleamed on us whenever in our rapture we deviated from the right path, show how precious we were to his heart? Did not the solicitude which every soldier manifested for our safety demonstrate how tenderly his late prisoners had entwined themselves around his deepest and best affections? Smite on your breasts, prostrate yourselves on the ground, and acknowledge that Theodorus is a grossly injured Monarch, and a most amiable and forgiving Christian. Such, perhaps, were the thoughts that floated through the mind of one or the other on that short hour’s travel. At the village where we alighted, a whole detachment of troops, without lance or sword, probably in order not to awaken any suspicion, sat basking in the sun’s mild rays. We wanted to encamp outside the fence that encircled the fragile tenements of the district governor’s abode, but were solemnly assured that this was impossible. ‘You,’ we were told, ‘are friends of the King, and we cannot allow you to camp in the open air, where hyænas, leopards, and lions may disturb your nocturnal slumbers.’ This was kind, provident, and considerate; and, with all our disgust for enclosures which we had imbibed at Magdala, we readily yielded to the commands of these cautious men. When our tents were all pitched, Lidj Abitou and his friend Kasai paid me a visit. I ordered some coffee, but he refused to drink any, as he was so very busy in attending to our rations. *En passant*, he inquired whether I or any of my companions had fire-arms. I told him that I had none, and that the majority of my companions were also unprovided with fire-arms, swords, or weapons of defence. He chuckled on hearing this, and then walked away, evidently pleased with the idea that the capture of the white men could be effected without any serious resistance. Late at noon we were all summoned into a hut to hear a letter read, which, it was pretended had that moment arrived from the King. We all thought that it was a parting epistle, embodying the following or similar contents: ‘I am well, and hope you are well. I love you, and want you also to love me. Send me cannon and gun makers to chastise my bad people, who advised me to chain you. By your favour, and the power of . . . I shall send their bodies to the grave and their souls to hell. Farewell.’

“The haystack-shaped cabin, on our entering, to our surprise, was closely lined by well-armed troops. We did not exhibit any fear; but, placing ourselves in front of the compact mass of sentinels, with some internal trepidation, awaited the issue of these strange and mysterious proceedings. Beitwodet Tadlo, a chief of

some note, who perished a year later under the executioner's knife, after putting some questions to his subordinates about our numbers, and whether all were present, unfolded a paper, and, lifting it on high, inquired whether we knew the seal. 'Yes, it is the King's,' was the simultaneous response. 'Guards, seize them!' and instantly each one was in the iron grasp of two or three ruffians. The blow was so sudden that we had no time to reflect or make any conjecture. One or two ejaculated, 'Are these villains going to murder us?' Quiet and order being restored, the royal epistle was next read. It began, as usual, in the name of the Trinity—the blasphemous despot had learned to interlard his abominable effusions with Scripture sentences—it then adverted to the friendly feeling that had always subsisted between the King and Mr. Rassam; touched in ambiguous language on an unhappy quarrel that had marred their attachment; and finally closed with an injunction to put us in chains, but not to maltreat us by any other infliction of suffering. Manacles—the heaviest I had yet seen—were soon hammered around the well-trained right and left wrists of each pair, and thus linked together we were driven, well watched, into prison. The two ladies and their children were exempted from this rigorous guardianship, and they had a quiet but sad night, in a tent that was assigned for their sole occupation.

"The weary night at last waned, and the grey light of dawn began to be visible through the chinks and holes of our prison. The clanking of chains and the sound of steps roused the snoring guards, who would gladly have slept half an hour more, had their restless charge been a little more considerate. By the time our braves had girded on their unwieldy swords, swathed themselves in their bulky belts, and removed the barricades that protected the doors, orders came that we should proceed to the lake, where boats were ready to convey us to the royal camp.

"Mid-day we reached Zeghee. Several of the European workmen, on our arrival, came out of the royal enclosure, but they took no notice of us, nor even sent a servant to inquire after the welfare of their brethren, of whom three were in our party. They were certainly slaves; or, as the King used to style them, most servile and subservient slaves. In getting out of the boats each one was searched, to see if he had any money about his person. This act was not dictated by hostile feeling towards us, but by pressing want. The soldiers were starving, the loyal provinces impoverished, and the exchequer drained and empty. These were contingencies that weighed heavily on his Majesty's mind; and as the wretched Frendjoj had a few dollars, the unscrupulous son of Solomon, who was never particular about the *tuum*, thought he might as well appropriate them to his own use. He had plundered me before of more than two hundred pounds in cash, besides a valuable collection of manuscripts, a watch, clothing, photographic apparatus, &c. I pardoned him those robberies, as he had at least some extenua-

tion in the custom of the country ; but to deprive a number of pardoned prisoners of a few paltry dollars, was an act worthy of a mean thief, and not of a mighty King.

“The following morning there was a grand court within the royal enclosure, to try the prisoners. It was a meagre and beggarly affair, compared to the imposing spectacle presented on a similar occasion, a little more than two years before, at Gondar. The tyrant himself, if he cast a retrospective glance at the past, must have felt the contrast most dire and rueful. He was then in the zenith of his power. Success everywhere attended his arms, and in the flush of glory the infatuated man really began to think that he was the Theodorus of prophecy. All was now reversed. His army had dwindled down from 150,000 warriors to about 25,000 ruffians. His extensive realm had shrivelled into a few provinces, and his schemes of foreign aggrandizement, had become confined to a desperate struggle with home rebels. Had he reflected, he might have remembered that his power began to wane from the very hour that a scarred, lacerated, and bleeding missionary, lay insensible at his feet ; but he had sold himself to work evil, till the bolt of justice put an end to his desolating career.

“Driven along like a gang of galley-slaves, we hurriedly traversed the camp, from whence, through a wide passage in the royal fence, we were ushered into the presence of the judge, jury, and audience. His Majesty was on an alga or divan ; the members of the mission on his right, about ten yards in front ; the European workmen about double the distance off in the same line ; and the rest, consisting of military chiefs, officers, and priests, were ranged in a semicircle, according to their rank. We were placed in a row at the farthest end of the assemblage, opposite the alga. His Majesty asked us a few questions about our health and welfare, which we acknowledged in prostrations so exact and uniform as to do credit to our long training. Consul Cameron, in whose behalf, it was said by high and low, soldier and chief, the mission had visited Abyssinia—a report not at all creditable to those who spread it—was ordered to be released of his chains, and placed near his brother officers. M. Bardel, probably on account of some special service, had the same honour assigned to him ; and the rest, who had neither merit nor official position, were obliged to gratify, in their humiliating handcuffs, the gaze of the assembled multitude. The questions propounded were of the old stereotyped stamp, with a few embellishments to heighten their effect. We were, of course, all meekness and submission. The fiendish malice in the tyrant’s eye, even more than words, expressed his disappointment with our conduct. He wanted to find an excuse for his vile treachery and base designs, in the boldness of the Captives, or in their defence of paltry charges preferred against them. His scheme failed, and he had to seek some other subterfuge to palliate his past proceedings, and to throw a veil over his well-matured, nefarious projects. ‘My children,’ he



then said to his workmen, who were called before him, 'is it right that I should ask for Kasa?' (compensation). Waldemeier and Zander, in their excitement, said loudly, 'Kasa is very good.' Perhaps if they had remembered that so many ears were listening with intense interest to every word they uttered, they would have expressed their opinion *sotto voce*, for they were both expert Abyssinian courtiers, of the real, genuine, and unmistakable type. The rest were more politic, except Saalmüller, who said distinctly, 'No, Kasa is bad.' These, then, were the men who, a few days before, had boldly requested the King to sanction our departure. The story is true, but the motives by which they were actuated will remain a mystery. It is most likely that the bold straightforwardness of the native Chiefs excited their emulation—an indiscretion for which some at least atoned by a diplomatic manœuvre, that screened them from his Majesty's displeasure.

"Before the Court was dissolved Mr. Rassam and his party were ordered to rise.

"The compressed thin lips and spasmodic contortions of the King's bloated face indicated something boisterous; but he restrained himself, and merely said, 'Why did you send the prisoners away before I was reconciled with them? Are you my masters? I want England to be my friend, for we two can make a hedge around Senaar. Now you remain with me; and wherever I go, you will go; and wherever I stay, you will stay.' Mr. Rassam, undaunted by royal rhetoric, like a Christian and a gentleman, in becoming terms, requested our release. His Majesty grinned, and then rejoined, 'Enough for to-day.'"

There is much to bewilder in the recapitulation of the varied incidents with which this period abounds. Events seem to move in a circle. There is apparently no real progress; and we return to the old and melancholy scenes to which we had vainly hoped that we had bidden adieu. The prospect of deliverance had passed away as the *mirage* of the desert. The blissful and tantalizing vision was again succeeded by the clang of fetters, and the gloom of the prison-house. The tyrant seemed to revel in the mental and moral torture of his victims, even when he did not resort to the former weapons of physical punishment. The attributes of the feline race seemed to predominate in him over every other characteristic, and he only permitted his prey to enjoy a certain measure of liberty, with the view of showing that escape was impossible.

Several documents had at that time reached the barbaric Court. Among them was the petition which had been addressed to Theo-

dorus by the relatives of the Captives. These documents were read aloud to the prisoners. Mr. Stern observed :—"Our relatives' mournful and affecting petition, made us forget the nonsensical ceremony in which we had taken such an active share, and with thrilling emotions we listened to every word of that tender appeal. The tyrant himself, as he said, when he received it about a month before, was deeply touched on perusing its contents, and the seriousness he evinced when it was read to us in English, a language of which he understood not a word, showed that the impression was not entirely effaced."

Cholera now broke out at Quarata. Hundreds, and even thousands, fell before this terrible scourge. The soldiery in particular were decimated by its ravages. Orders were given to remove the camp to Debra Tabor. The professed honour with which Mr. Rassam had been treated was followed by marked disrespect, and he was now regarded as a prisoner, and confined in a black and dismal tent. The King at one time proposed to keep him as a hostage, and dismiss the other prisoners; but the decisions of one moment, were reversed the next. The conflict between one line of action and another, came, however, to an end; and while the Monarch turned his attention to the provinces which had revolted against his authority, Mr. Rassam and the European prisoners were despatched again to the royal prison-house of Amba Magdala. Often, may he and Mr. Stern have recalled to memory, the contrast between their present condition, and the circumstances under which they first met, in the city of Mosul.

"Whilst the King was rioting in carnage and bloodshed, his white victims, to their joy and gratitude, were far away from him, on the world-wide known Amba Magdala. Our journey, which was fatiguing, occupied four good days. Near the fortress we were met by about two hundred men of the garrison; most were old acquaintances, and evidently not displeased to see us again. 'May the Lord open you!'—the salutation with which they grinningly greeted us—was the key-note that told of chains and a prison. What the old prisoners most dreaded was, however, not fetters, but the common gaol. Our fears were speedily removed, and to our satisfaction we were, under a strong guard, escorted to a house near the royal fence, formerly the prison of his Majesty's disgraced friends.

"We reached the Amba on July 12th, and on the 16th, foot chains were hammered around our legs. The Commandant, who had received some valuable presents from Mr. Rassam, did not admire this harsh treatment of the liberal Frendjoj, and as he knew that the truth was an ugly fact, he had recourse to the palpable falsehood, that chains were the inevitable condition of an Amba residence. It was a well-meant, but ludicrous and stupid lie.

"A few days after we were shackled, the Ras, conjointly with his Council—for without serious deliberation nothing could be done—enlarged our premises, and we got two other huts in addition to the one we already occupied. The real genuine prison, which faced the entrance to our compound, was assigned to Consul Cameron, Mr. Rosenthal, and myself. Opposite to this was the kitchen, a large rickety circular building; this was given to Messrs. Kerans, Pietro, the Mission's Indian servants, and some hangers on. The entrances to the two buildings were in such close proximity, that long before breakfast or dinner was ready, puffs of smoke, redolent with the fumes of seasoned viands, announced the bill of fare. This did not inconvenience us; on the contrary, the smell of roast, curry and stew, after all the abominable odours we had inhaled in the common prison, was a luxury which our olfactory nerves most keenly appreciated.

"Apart from the dwellings of the low and inferior prisoners, about a hundred yards to the right, in isolated grandeur, stood the abode of the Envoy—a hostage, as Theodorus himself said, of no mean repute. It could not boast of much architectural beauty or taste, but it was well thatched, clean, and furnished. In a parallel line with 'the residency,' as in the peculiar jargon of Magdala we used occasionally to designate M. Rassam's dwelling, the eye fell on an immense cage, a kind of structure that might have been taken at a little distance for a hay-stack, and, on closer inspection, for a village circus. This formed the home of his two companions, Dr. Blanc and Lieut. Prideaux. The five old prisoners, and the occupants of the kitchen were guarded by soldiers, during the night, a nuisance from which the members of the mission were exempted. It was asserted, that the King himself had given the order; but as we were more than a week allowed to sleep unwatched, the story lacked even the appearance of probability. Samuel was, no doubt, the contriver of the arrangement, as it enhanced his importance, and tended to maintain an invidious distinction between the prisoners. A few months later, Consul Cameron, who had succeeded in ingratiating himself with Samuel, got permission to sleep in a hut, undisturbed by noisy guards; and in December, 1867, at the kind request of Mr. Rassam and Dr. Blanc, a similar concession was extended to me.

"Exiled and banished on a rocky fortress, in the heart of Africa, the question which most agitated our minds, was the conveyance of letters down to the coast. During our first captivity we sent every

month or two some messengers down to Massowah. They seldom met with an untoward accident, and, if they did not quarrel or fight, were almost sure to pass unmolested through the various provinces they had to traverse. Mr. Rassam availed himself of the same agencies; and as he had a whole host of followers, he could select the most trustworthy, whenever he had important despatches to forward. The messengers were invariably warned of the dangers they would have to encounter if caught by the King's people—a precaution that kept them in a wholesome tremor, till they were far beyond the rocks and ravines that encircle Magdala. It was humiliating to think, that in the wilds of Africa, a few unfortunate foreign captives, should not be able to express their hopes and fears to distant relatives and friends without some risk and danger. The very idea of such a contingency appeared ridiculous; and yet it was not less strange than true, that a simple sentence—and that, too, couched in a foreign language—an evil-disposed European might have perverted into a most wicked, mischievous, and cruel offence. Happily, it only occurred once; and we have to thank our faithful native messengers that it did not occur again. The will existed, but the proofs were wanting.

“Our great difficulty very often consisted in concealing letters after they were written. Generally the messengers departed as soon as they were finished, but sometimes it happened, that on the very morning when they were to leave, intelligence reached us that the road was unsafe, or that some of the garrison had gone to a neighbouring district. In the beginning, when such an emergency arose, we entrusted them to our native friends on the Amba; but during the last few months of our captivity, we concealed them in the bamboos that supported the thatched roofs of our huts.

“The journey down to the coast and back to Magdala, a tolerable pedestrian could accomplish in two months. Most of the messengers performed the first trip in less time than was expected. The second, however, was not so expeditious, and the third outrageously long. The causes of the delays were obvious. An Abyssinian without money, is most obedient, industrious and frugal; but with money, he is lazy, arrogant and luxurious. Now, as each man, on his arrival at Massowah, got twenty Maria Theresa dollars, and perhaps a gratuity on his return; he thought it necessary, after two, or the utmost three trips, to repay himself for his toil, by a little indulgence in those gratifications, which every Abyssinian village so abundantly offers. Tedj, arackee, and other pleasures, did not, however, spoil their honesty, or make them indifferent to what was entrusted to their charge.

“Our money we got through the same channel; and out of the number that were employed, only one man lost about eighty dollars; all the rest brought the sums entrusted to them quite intact. This honesty in our Abyssinians—a race proverbial for their thie-

vish proclivities—frequently amazed us. It is true they could not easily abscond with two hundred dollars, the sum each man carried, as probably the rebels would speedily have relieved them of their dishonest wealth. But these I do not think were considerations that had much influence with them. They had, I believe, a kind of religious terror, blended with a slight attachment to their masters; and these united deterred them from decamping. Had they been rogues, we should have had a terrible existence at Magdala. Although it was said, that the King had ordered rations for the members of the mission, I do not believe it; but even if it had been true, they might have perished on the bounties, that would have been doled out to them by the royal purveyors. I and my companions had experienced something of this mode of existence. Luckily, or rather providentially, we were seldom long without money; or else we might have gnawed our lips in the grim agonies of starvation."

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## CHAPTER XL.

### ROYAL SYMPATHY. NATIONAL ANXIETY.

The time of captivity was now counted by years. In the ordinary events of life, men become cold and languid when contemplating the incessant recurrence of the same tale, however sad ; and the like events, however remarkable. But the consequences of the captivity at Magdala were so serious, that the anxieties and eagerness of the English people increased perceptibly, as this lengthened period passed on.

Earnest and unremitting prayer, was accompanied by keen and unwearied sympathy. Few there were who forgot the families of the Captives, whose days and nights were passed in trembling anticipation. This cheered and encouraged them ; and Mrs. Stern in particular realized, how many were ready, by any means in their power, to soothe and comfort her, amidst her sorrows and perplexities.

England's QUEEN, has always, by her bright and noble example, led the van in all that adorns her womanly instincts, as well as her regal state. Whenever public and even private sorrow reaches the royal ear, it meets with generous and loving sympathy. Although the following letter is introduced in anticipation of events which are still to be related, it is entitled to precedence over other correspondence, of which some examples are now given. Mrs. Stern had ventured to address the Queen, through the instrumentality of Lord Stanley, who had become Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. General Grey, Her Majesty's Equerry, received the Queen's commands to give the following reply :—

“General Grey has received the commands of the Queen to acknowledge the receipt of Mrs. Stern’s letter, forwarded by Lord Stanley.

“Her Majesty has sympathized deeply with those, whose friends and relations have suffered such a long and cruel captivity in Abyssinia; and now joins with them in heartfelt gratitude to God, for the success which has attended the measures taken for their release. She congratulates Mrs. Stern on the termination of this long period of anxious suspense, and trusts that her husband may now be soon restored to her, without having suffered in health from his long confinement.

“General Grey is also desired, to thank Mrs. Stern, for her kind congratulations on the providential escape of the Duke of Edinburgh from the pistol of the assassin.

“Osborne, May 7, 1868.”

In the field of religious and useful literature, the name of *Miss Tucker* is well known under the signature of A. L. O. E. The letters of one so loved and distinguished, are worthy of being preserved; and they are suitably added, in order that an illustration may be given of the character of the correspondence, in which Mrs. Stern was frequently occupied.

“Madam,—Permit one who is a perfect stranger to you, and yet, I trust, a sister in Christ, to offer to you the expression of her sympathy, under the long-protracted trial of your noble husband’s imprisonment. It appears as if we must not look to Government for the means of breaking his chain, and it occurs to me that if some one could suggest to the mind of King Theodorus the expedience of commuting *imprisonment* for *fine*, the cupidity of the man might be gratified, while his pride would not be wounded. Could such an agreement be entered into, how joyfully would many contribute their mites to ransom the prisoner, and give back the honoured Missionary to the work of the Church! It may seem presumptuous in me to venture to suggest anything to those who must have given the subject such deep thought and attention; but sympathy at least is soothing, and you may like to know that in such a place as the Marylebone Poorhouse (which I visit) it is felt for Mr. Stern and his afflicted companions! May the Almighty spread

over them His protecting wing, and give them, as he gave St. Peter, to the prayers of the Church.

“Yours, Madam, with Christian regard,

“A. L. O. E.,

“Authoress of the Young Pilgrim, &c.”

“July 7th, 1865.”

“Childown Cottage, Chertsey.

“Dear Madam,—Your letter, addressed to me as A. L. O. E., only reached me a few hours ago, owing to my absence from my usual residence, or it would have received a more speedy reply. ‘The accompanying letters’ which you mention, and which would be most interesting, I have not received at all; I hope that they are not lost, but that they may come by the morning’s post. I hope and will pray that our God may bless Dr. Beke’s mission. Much will, I should think, humanly speaking, depend upon the selection of such presents as would be likely to strike a barbaric monarch as curious and beautiful. It seems presumptuous, in one so ignorant on the subject as myself, to suggest such things as the stereoscope, with those pictures which give candle-light effects; or those ingenious working models of steamers, &c., which, I believe, are to be procured at Cremer’s, in Regent-street. Few things, perhaps, would give the Emperor Theodorus a grander idea of the extent of our Sovereign’s power than a good coloured map of London, or that panoramic view of it which I remember was once contained in the *Illustrated News*. I am sure that you will make the matter of the choice of presents a subject for prayer.

“Will you kindly take charge of the enclosed offering? I should like it to be put down thus: ‘Our brethren have need’ (1 John iii., 17). Perhaps that verse referred to, may touch some other heart.

“The pressure of such long-continued anxiety on your mind must be very wearying, very trying to faith! I have known something of it, for all my five brothers were in India at the fearful mutiny time, four of them in imminent danger! It was so hard to see God’s hand in that trial! Yet, dear Madam, I have found that though ‘heaviness endureth for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning.’ The Rev. M. Judson sowed ‘in tears,’—what anguish was endured by his wife,—but the harvest was a harvest of *light*! If, as we hope and pray, your husband and his companions be released from their cruel bondage, how much more weight his words are likely to have with the Falashas. His sufferings may at this moment, be preaching a powerful sermon to those whom his voice cannot reach. Satan probably thought that he had succeeded in silencing John Bunyan when that good man was cast into prison; but the result was a book through which he has preached for centuries, to generation after generation, and in many tongues to many nations. Does

not Bunyan now in glory praise and bless God for his prison ? May it be thus with your husband !

“Yours with true sympathy and Christian regard,

“C. M. TUCKER.

“August 24th, 1865.

“P.S.—Pray, in addressing a letter to me, put both my initials, ‘Miss C. M. Tucker.’”

“Dear Madam,—I enclose stamps for a copy of the Captives’ letters, which I wish to take with me to the Marylebone Poor-house to-morrow. It would rejoice the sufferers to know, what a strong interest is taken by some of the inmates in their fate ; that in several of the wards prayer has been offered for them, and that any fresh tidings are eagerly welcomed in that abode of poverty and sorrow.

“Trusting that a blessing may rest upon Dr. Beke’s mission,

“I remain, dear Madam, faithfully yours,

“C. M. TUCKER.

“3, Upper Portland-place, W., Nov. 27th, 1865.”

The British Resident at Aden, Colonel Merewether, through whom letters and despatches were conveyed to Massowah and Abyssinia, was in frequent communication with Mrs. Stern ; and with the utmost courtesy and consideration kept her informed of anything which transpired, by which her anxieties and distress might be alleviated. The following letters will suffice to indicate the kind and unwearied interest which he took in the negotiations, which were actively carried on for the release of the prisoners :—

“Aden, 7th March, 1865.

“My dear Madam,—The enclosed letter from your husband arrived the day before yesterday, from Massowah. I regret deeply that I am unable to send you with it any tidings of the prospect of early release of the poor Captives ; but it is one step in advance being able to intercommunicate, which hitherto we had been unable to do, and I trust we may accept this as a good omen of better progress in future. The determined silence of the King is *the* obstacle ; every possible endeavour is being used to remove that, and we may hope that on his return to his Capital he will give attention to the letters which have been addressed to him from Massowah.

“Permit me to offer you my sincere sympathy in so many trials, and to remain,

“My dear Madam, yours faithfully,

“W. L. MEREWETHER,

“Lt.-Colonel, Resident.”

“Aden, 4th February, 1866.

“Dear Madam,—I had the pleasure of receiving by last mail your letter of the 9th January. I can assure you the information you received about letters from your husband and the poor Captives being detained at Aden, was totally incorrect. Any letters which have come here from Abyssinia, have invariably been sent on to England by the first steamer—several times this has happened on the same day they have been received.

“On the 21st ult., I sent a thick packet for you to the Rev. Mr. Goodhart, which had only reached me that morning. It will, I hope, have been delivered safely to you, and from it you will have learned the latest tidings of the poor prisoners. Consul Cameron writes in good spirits, and on the 27th September says:—‘We have weathered the winter season famously, though not without trouble.’ This letter is the latest. In a previous one, dated the 18th, he wrote:—‘We have had some trouble in getting comfortably through the winter, owing to the difficulty of getting provisions; but there has been no one ill except Rosenthal, who has been shut up for about ten days with neuralgia and sore eyes.’

“They had heard of Mr. Rassam being on his way up, and hopeful in consequence. Your husband’s note was dated 12th September only. He told Mr. Rassam to use the packet addressed to you as he liked (it being the continuation of his most interesting journal); but I am sorry to say I had not time even to read it—wishing it should not miss that day’s mail, so sent it on with the other letters.

“There was, I am sorry to say, some delay at Massowah with these letters, owing to unavoidable circumstances. Operations in the interior of Arabia, compelled the employment on that coast of the Victoria steamer up to the 9th January, so that she did not visit Massowah in December, as I had previously arranged. The letters reached Massowah on the 15th December, and Mons. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate, very properly, I think, kept them till the Victoria came, instead of sending them by native boat to this place, a very tedious and uncertain process at this time of year.

“Mr. Rassam was progressing excellently well. He reached Kassala on the 6th November, left it on the 9th, and expected to be at Metemma on the 20th. It was reported, and believed to be true, that the King had moved into Godjam, to be near Metemma, and that he had the poor prisoners with him; but this last required confirmation. I have, however, every hope that within a fortnight or so we shall receive good and most cheering tidings. If nothing unfortunate happened to stop Mr. Rassam, I have perfect confidence that all will go well directly he joins the King, and that he should do, some time in December—about the 20th. I sincerely



hope, therefore, that the *late* Captives may be the expression we should use, and that they passed a happier Christmas than they have known for the last three.

“H.M. ship Syra will proceed to Massowah in a few days, and should bring a portion of the good tidings.

“With renewed expressions of sincere sympathy, and best wishes that our present expectations may be fully realized,

“Believe me, dear Madam,

“Very faithfully yours,

“W. L. MEREWETHER.”

“Aden, March 4th, 1866.

“My dear Madam,—H.M.S. Syra returned from Massowah yesterday, bringing news from the unfortunate Captives up to the 27th December. They had all been suffering from bad influenza since the previous accounts, but at the time of writing had got quite over that, and were as well as could be under such circumstances. No letter came from your husband, so I send you these few hasty lines, the latter part of which will, I hope, give you some comfort. But before mentioning the good tidings, I regret to have to tell you of poor Mrs. Rosenthal having lost her child, on the 11th December. It had never been very strong, and had at last sunk under the privations it had to endure. A daughter was born to them on the 18th of the same month, and Mrs. Rosenthal and the baby were doing very well when the last letters left, on the 27th. Will you kindly communicate this to their family and friends?

“The good tidings are, that Mr. Rassam reached Metemma on the 21st November, and there found a very courteous greeting from the King, as well as an escort; and on the 4th January was about 50 miles only west of Gondar, *en route* to the Court of the King; after which he was to go to Debra Tabor or Korata, and by this time is, I hope, in personal communication with the poor prisoners—a glorious, bright day for them, when it occurs. The King had given special instructions to everyone, to be most civil to Mr. Rassam’s party, and to supply them with everything.

“I hope to have more, and even better tidings, before the end of this month. Mr. Flad, from Gaffat, writes that the King had written to the Europeans there, that an Ambassador was coming to him from the English, and that, after he had seen him, he would send him on to Gaffat, when they were to treat him with due honour. The Europeans and Abyssinians at Gaffat all thought the King had changed, and that the object of Mr. Rassam’s journey would be obtained now. Trusting most sincerely, and confidently believing it may be so,

“Believe me, my dear Madam,

“Yours very truly,

“W. L. MEREWETHER.”

Many kindly letters flowed in, from those who were eager at the time to help the Fund, by which Dr. Beke might be enabled to accomplish the longed-for release of the Captives.

“Castle Hill, Farnham, Sept. 28, 1865.

“Dear Mrs. Stern,—I am a little boy, who feels very sorry for your husband’s captivity, and I hope that the gentleman who is going out, will succeed in getting him released. I enclose half a sovereign, which I have collected; and I wish it to go to the fund for helping Mr. Stern.

“Ever, believe me, yours truly,

“F. H.”

The late Bishop of Carlisle’s (Dr. Waldegrave) letter, is among the few which have been preserved.

“Rose Castle, Carlisle, 18th November, 1865.

“Dear Madam,—I will gladly subscribe five pounds to your Liberation Fund. I wish I could promise more. Pray apply for it when wanted.

“Faithfully yours,

“SAML. CARLISLE.

“Mrs. Stern.”

It is not inappropriate to insert here a part of a letter which the Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, the present Bishop of Exeter, wrote to Mr. Stern on his safe return to England. It serves to illustrate, the nature of the intercessions, which day by day ascended to the throne of grace, for his preservation and deliverance.

“Christ Church Parsonage, Hampstead, N.W.

“Dear Mr. Stern,—Our hearts have been filled with joy and praise at your safe return. You may remember speaking in an iron room in my garden, for the Jews Society, some little while before you went to Abyssinia. This gave you a strong hold in the hearts of my affectionate flock, and prayers were continually offered both in my church and among the families of my congregation, and even by my *little* children, day by day, for you. Our hearts thank God for you.”

The Dowager Lady Dynevor, has very considerably communicated, the following interesting reminiscence of that season of anxiety and hope. She writes:—“I always associated the name of Dr. Stern with a beloved son, whom, with my dear husband, Dr. Stern has now met in the presence of the King of Kings. My child, Francis Carnegie Rice, was about nine years of age when he attended

with me a Meeting, held in our parish of Fairford, in Gloucestershire, for the Jews Society. At this Meeting, the Rev. J. Drury was the Deputation. He told us with touching earnestness the sad tale of suffering through which Mr. Stern, and other missionary servants of the Lord, were passing in Abyssinia; and of the cruel tortures which they had endured at the hand of the merciless tyrant, who ruled over that country. He asked the prayers of Christians for them, and thus enlisted on their behalf the deepest sympathy and prayers of my darling child. He watched with remarkable intelligence for his age, the progress of events and the war in Abyssinia, by which the oppression of Theodorus was terminated. As long as memory lasts, I shall never forget the day, when 'The Times' announced that event. In the joy of his heart, he called from down-stairs—'Mamma, our prayers are answered, King Theodorus is dead.' He could not wait even to come up to my room, but twice repeated the sentence. The tones of triumph, with which he exclaimed that the Captives would now be set free, ring in my ears, as I almost now hear his shout. During those months of suspense, his interest in those servants of the Lord never flagged. Three months after that time, the Master came and called my bright and beautiful boy to be with him for ever. I afterwards mentioned this to Mr. Stern, as a prominent reason for my interest in his 'Wanderers' Home.'"

The young as well as the old were thus swelling the tide of prayer. The time came, when their hearts were one in praise.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE TIDINGS OF SALVATION IN AMBA MAGDALA.

The persecutions which harassed the primitive Church at Jerusalem, were God's own appointed means for the spread of the Gospel. The preachers of "the Word" were "scattered abroad" in every place, to make known the message of Redemption. The history of those years of terrible captivity within the fortress of Amba Magdala, had its corresponding episode of unspeakable blessing. It is probable, that, like Samson of old, of whom it is recorded that "he slew at his death more than they which he slew in his life," Mr. Stern's labours in captivity were more signally owned of God to the salvation of souls, than those of which we trace such encouraging results when he was at liberty. Nor can we fail to observe with rejoicing, that the flame of divine love, which, in the incidents of his former missionary life, led him to seize every opportunity of doing his Master's work, was a constraining principle which animated his heart, even when manacled and helpless. Like the prophet Jeremiah, he might exclaim, "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." The foul and pestilential atmosphere of the prison-house was, during his first incarceration in Magdala, disregarded, as of little moment, so long as he might lead sinners to the Saviour, and preach deliverance to those who were in bondage to Satan and to sin.

"Most of my companions, immediately after sunrise, sought the shelter of their huts outside the prison-fence. I never erected one of those tenements, and generally remained within the compound, where scores of criminals did not allow time to hang heavily upon me.

"We had now visitors every day. Some came to hear what we had to say about our religion; others wanted an explanation of a Scripture passage; and not a few, among whom were the royal scribes, wished to obtain an intelligent knowledge of that Gospel in which they professed to believe. The guards did not approve of these visits, but by coaxing, and cups of strong coffee, they were won over to our side; and almost every day my lair was crowded to suffocation by three, four, and sometimes more, honest and candid inquirers after the truth. Our fellow-captives, provoked to emulation by what they witnessed, also began to inquire into the great and overwhelming questions which had excited general attention. A vast majority, of course, could not read, but they were so earnest, that many an old man began to study the alphabet; and very often for hours and hours, these illiterate disciples drove one mad, with their loud, monotonous chants of hissing consonants and deafening vowels.

"The light of truth, kindled in the hearts of a few soldiers and captives, soon communicated itself to kindred spirits and congenial minds. The priests observed this movement, and clamorously raised their voices to check its onward progress. Their opposition stirred up stagnant superstition, and won fresh supporters to the cause of the Gospel. There were meetings and public disputations; warm debates and sharp threats. The champions of truth appealed to the Bible; and the defenders of error, to saints and legends of the Church. These contests, which exhibited the worthlessness of monkish puerilities, and brought out in bold relief the pure and soul-saving declarations of Scripture, invariably proved disastrous to the cause of the Church and its untutored champions. Several of the latter, prompted by a solemn conviction that their creed was not in harmony with the Word of God, seceded from their own ranks, and joined the number of their opponents, whose very life proclaimed the pure and ennobling doctrines of their faith. What influence these bands of believers may yet exert on their unhappy country, it is impossible to prognosticate. They may, to escape the moral pollution of the world in which they live, seek the retirement of the isolated village and solitary mountain range; and they may also, prompted by a holy and divine impulse, like the messengers of glad tidings who in times of yore planted the standard of the cross on the Abyssinian Alps, go forth, in the full ardour of their young love and zeal, to spread far and wide, over scenes of sin and vice, superstition and ignorance, the saving and enlightening knowledge of the Gospel.

"The Word of God, the comfort and solace, the prop and support of the suffering and sorrowing, was an inexhaustible treasure in the dungeon of the captive. With raptures the eye rested on its soul-thrilling pages, picturing to its view the cross, the emblem of redeeming love and mercy; or wandering, by faith, amidst scenes of glory and bliss, that poured a flood of gladness into the despond-



ing heart. The weakened mind could not, however, for any great length of time, sustain the effort of deep thought, without serious injury. A religious movement among some of Mr. Rassam's people, daily afforded me occupation for one or two hours. It commenced with *Immer Ali*, the dragoman, a Mahommedan from the coast. He was a good, upright, and honest man. His knowledge was exceedingly limited—a defect which he sought to remedy by an earnest application to the study of the Amharic Bible. His baptism, induced six more of his countrymen to put themselves under my instruction. Two of them were serious and earnest men, but the other four I considered very unsatisfactory characters.

“Our Sundays were to the majority, the best, if not the happiest days in the week. The old prisoners, who had been robbed and plundered by the King and his people of all that they possessed, were reduced to great indigence, in all those articles that adorn the outer man. Mr. Rassam and Dr. Blanc, who had their wardrobes nearly complete, most liberally assisted us; and it was quite a luxury on the morning of the Lord's-day, to don clean and decent garments. At ten o'clock, we regularly had Divine service in the Envoy's hut. Our worship consisted in the reading of the Liturgy, a short sermon, and a prayer adapted to our peculiar circumstances. A prison, and that, too, in Abyssinia, is not the best school for the cultivation of those graces which ennoble nature and refine the heart; nevertheless, we still endeavoured, more or less, according to our peculiar temperament, views and sentiments, to maintain the decencies of civilized life, and to make quietness and confidence our strength.”

The accounts which Mr. Stern gave of the power of the Word of God, in the conversion of natives of the highest rank, was most interesting and impressive.

“The *Wagshum Defaree*, one of the most powerful chieftains in the country, paid me a visit. This proud and brave noble, who can boast of an ancestry far less doubtful than that which King Theodorus claimed, little dreamed on that day, when thousands of devoted retainers stood ready to obey his behest, that before many years had rolled by, he, the great lord, would be the fellow-prisoner of the lonely Missionary. Prepossessing in appearance, courteous in deportment, and brave above all fears, he had become the idol of his followers, and the general favourite of the people. My own mission very much interested him, and he offered me assistance and protection if I visited Lasta and Bellesa, the provinces which, from time immemorial, constituted the patrimony of his family. The rebellion of his nephew, Wagshum Gobagee, whose name became well-known during our captivity and Lord Napier's expedition, excited the King's distrust against him; and he was suddenly arrested, and, under a strong escort, despatched to the prison at

Magdala. The Word of God in Amharic, printed by the Bible Society, and also a copy of our Liturgy in Amharic, of which the gaolers did not deprive him, were now his constant companions. He was again and again informed, that the King had determined upon his execution; but the invariable reply was: 'Let him do so. Earth has lost its attractions, and heaven is the goal for which I sigh.' The battle of Arogil, which accelerated the tyrant's fate, saved Defaree's, and many other imprisoned chiefs' lives. After his release by Lord Napier, his nephew, who at present rules over the greater part of the country west of the Palcazie, would have been obliged to resign the government into his hands; but he would not yield to the importunities of the people; for he was sick, as he repeatedly told me, of war, and the excitement of battles, and was only desirous to enjoy peace and quiet in the bosom of his family, and in communion with his God."

"Throughout all the anxious days and agonizing nights of these long four years, the Bible, with its promises, was the solace and support of the desponding heart. At one time, for six weeks, I was deprived of this sacred treasure, and when a Bible was again handed to me, the joy I experienced was boundless. Never did a miser more eagerly hug his gold, than I clasped the priceless volume.

"Surrounded by hosts of guards, who found a pleasure in watching the white Captives, I availed myself of the opportunity, and occasionally spoke to them on the subject of religion. This enlisted their attention, and, in less than a week, salvation through the blood of redeeming love became the absorbing topic of conversation. Sometimes, surrounded by a group of these eager inquirers after truth, I quite forgot my crippling chains and prison-home. The mental respite was brief, but delightful. One afternoon, before we were shut up at Magdala, a big Chief, with an air of supercilious hauteur, came strutting into our prison. Without offering the usual salutation, 'May the Lord release you,' which an Abyssinian seldom omits when he chances to come near a prisoner in fetters, the great man glanced proudly round, and then favoured me with a special penetrating stare. Angry and indignant, I looked at him sternly in turn. The exertion of the steady gaze, as well as the overwhelming burden of our hapless misery, brought tears into my eyes. 'Cocab,' asked the haughty Chief, in an ironical tone, 'do you admire me?' 'Yes,' I rejoined, in the same key, 'I admire you exceedingly.' 'And do you also admire my silk dress?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'for I bought it, and paid a good sum for it.' 'And do you think,' he continued, in the same tone, 'that butter will enhance its beauty and duration?' I assured him that I had never dipped silk into butter, but that if he thought it would improve its quality and appearance, he ought by all means to try it. 'Well, you are right,' was the reply; 'and now, as I have to attend to my soldiers, I must be off, but to-morrow I shall call again.' With these words he hur-

ried away, and we were glad enough to see his shadow receding from our prison door.

“Faithful to his promise, he again paid us a visit on the following day. This time his hair and lilac silk dress were a greasy, shining mass; and he had evidently just emerged from the hands of the barber. Our guards had quite accustomed us to an atmosphere redolent of rancid butter; but the lavish profusion which the great chief had indulged in, diffused an odour within the limited space, that proved too strong even for our blunted olfactory nerves. To my discomfort, he squatted down close to me. I tried to avoid a too intimate contact, but before I could move away in my heavy manacles, one of his hands fell smartly on my shoulders, whilst with the other he roughly seized my chained wrist. The sudden jerk of the fetters lacerated the skin, and caused a good deal of pain. This did not trouble him; on the contrary, he assured me it was an act of unwonted condescension that a man of such lofty rank as himself should honour a prisoner even with the slightest touch of his fingers. I felt inclined to retort in terms he justly merited, but the fear of increasing my own as well as my companions’ misery, induced me to bow in acknowledgment of the distinguished favour. ‘Well, Cocab,’ he continued, ‘you appreciate me, and I also want to be your friend. You are aware that in our country, anyone who incurs ‘Negoos’ (the King’s) displeasure is out of the pale of the law. He may be beaten, kicked, and stripped of every rag with impunity. Thus, if I felt disposed, I might remove the skin on which you sleep, or tighten the fetters in which you are bound; and yet you could not make a complaint.’ Unable to endure the insolence of this conceited savage, I silenced his offensive tongue by telling him, that only cowards would maltreat unfortunate men who were shut up in a dungeon, and deprived of the use of their limbs. ‘Yehun’ (let it be so), was the prompt reply; ‘but now, I want you to speak to me on the subject of your religion. You always talk to my soldiers about the ‘angeel’ (Gospel), why not also to me?’ Most gladly did I avail myself of this invitation, and, for about an hour, the potent Chief and some of his personal attendants crouched round me, and listened with devout interest to a statement of some of the essential doctrines of the Gospel. He was much pleased with what he heard, and to evince his gratitude, he ordered the officer of our guards to treat us kindly, and not like common malefactors. The next day he repeated his visit, and then again the day after; and he continued to visit us daily with scarcely an exception for about a fortnight. During that short period his deportment improved very considerably. He no longer blustered and bragged about his honours and dignities, power and possessions. His followers, too, noticed that he drank less tedj (mead), and that he was more serious. Sometimes, to their surprise, he would take the Amharic Bible, of which he possessed a copy, and read to them certain passages or chapters, which con-

demned the very vices, to which till quite recently, he had been addicted. On one occasion he asked me whether the people in our country used butter for their hair, or, like the Arabs in the Soudan, applied tallow or castor-oil. He was informed that we preferred water, which promoted health and cleanliness. 'You are always right,' was his rejoinder; 'and, if his Majesty had not been offended by the rulers beyond Jerusalem, you might teach us much that is good and useful.'"

Mr. Flad had been sent on an Embassy to England. On his arrival in this country on this important mission, he had a personal audience of the Queen, at Windsor Castle. Theodorus desired a letter from the Queen, which was graciously written; but he desired also that skilled workmen should accompany Mr. Flad to Abyssinia, in order to cast cannon, and manufacture gunpowder. This was not done. The tyrant's object, therefore, was not accomplished, and the tyrant's wrath was unsubdued. Mr. Flad purchased by direction of the King, and at the King's cost, a quantity of mechanical tools, during his short stay in England. His wife and children were retained as hostages, and as a pledge that he would return to Abyssinia.

The state of the country at this time was most perplexing. On the borders of Magdala the enemies of Theodorus were active and threatening. The prisoners hoped and prayed that in the absence of the King, the fortress might be attacked and carried, and that in this way their liberty might be attained. But the demonstrations of hostility never spread so far as the dreaded fortress. It was not from this quarter that deliverance was to arise. To British arms, and British prowess, were to be given the honour and happiness of effecting this object.

And now that the long and dreary night of suffering and sorrow, is to be succeeded by the dawn and sunlight of the day of joy and freedom, there is one special feature of this history which ought to be carefully noted. The Captives, who throughout these calamitous years, had to bear the chief burden of the tyrant's indignation, were Mr. Stern and Mr. Rosenthal. They were emphatically the two, who, in their conduct and in their letters, exhibited most marvellously the power of divine faith, and the evidence that they were the peculiar subjects of divine grace and love. These men were

*Jewish Converts*—they belonged to the elect remnant of that people, of whose sincerity and genuine conversion to God, many, so-called Christians, profess to stand in doubt. “Ye are my witnesses,” saith the Lord. The eyes must be blind, and the heart must be as hard as “the nether millstone,” which fail to acknowledge, that these men were “burning and shining lights”—“the servants of the most High God”—who “in simplicity and sincerity” proclaimed to their fellow-sinners “the way of salvation.”

The subsequent history of Abyssinia, has been one of anarchy and strife. But the bread cast upon the waters, has been found after many days. The seed sown, amidst scenes of sorrow and suffering, has taken root downward and borne fruit upward; and continues to afford the pledge and evidence, that those works of faith and labours of love, have borne permanent fruit, and have “not been in vain in the Lord.”

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## CHAPTER XLII.

### THE BRITISH EXPEDITION.

A change had taken place in the *personnel* of Her Majesty's Government. Instead of Earl Russell, Lord Stanley (the present Earl of Derby) filled the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The new Secretary of State, had never been distinguished for the heroic treatment of any of the national problems, which might require his intervention. His temperament, was neither warlike, nor ambitious. But there could, at that juncture, have hardly been a doubt as to the course which this country was bound to pursue. The imprisonment and maltreatment of the British Consul, had been followed by the incarceration of the Envoy, through whom, the Government had vainly expected that the release of the former, and that of the other Captives, would have been effected. Theodorus of Abyssinia had become an intemperate and blood-thirsty monster, who had trodden under foot every moral and political obligation; and who defied from his mountain fastnesses, the power and hostility of the world.

There was but one opinion and one cry. Every reasonable effort had been made to lead this barbarian to act with common sense, even in the consideration of his own interests. All had failed; and one only resort was left, and that a resort to arms. The Imperial power of this country had its ramifications in almost every part of the world; and it was easy to see, that apart from all other considerations, to hesitate concerning vigorous and decided action, would be to hazard dangers and disaffection in the East, and all other parts of England's dominions.

At this juncture Mr. Purday, father-in-law to Mr. Stern, addressed a letter to Lord Stanley, in which he ventured to observe, that the use of force appeared to be the only course now open to the Government, and the only means by which the Captives might be released. To this Lord Stanley gave the following significant reply :—

“ Foreign Office, May 27, 1867.

“ Sir,—I am directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, in which you state, that from letters received from Abyssinia, the relatives of the Captives feel perfectly convinced that nothing but force will induce King Theodorus to give up the prisoners, and that if Her Majesty's Government do not take immediate steps to rescue them, they must necessarily be sacrificed.

“ I am to state to you, in reply, that the question of the use of force has not been overlooked ; indeed, it appears to have been considered by the last as well as by the present Government. It involves, however, many other questions of serious difficulty, including the important matter of the distance of the seat of war from India, which must necessarily be the base of operations ; as well as the distance of Magdala from the point at which the troops would be landed ; but the most important question which arises is, what effect would the use of force have on the fate of the Captives ?

“ The object of the employment of force would of course be to save their lives, and to effect their release ; but a very strong opinion is held by many persons that it would instantly lead to the murder of the Captives. It is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to spare no efforts to avoid so disastrous a result ; and they are still in hopes, that the steps they have taken will lead to the liberation of the prisoners.

“ I am, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

“ JAMES MURRAY.

“ Charles H. Purday, Esq., 24, Great Marlborough-street.”

Sir J. Lytton Bulwer, in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, observed :—“ In all matters one can only do the right thing, and abide the consequences. Moreover, if there is the chance of an unfortunate result from the employment of force, there is the certainty of a miserable result from the employment of bribery. In the first place, for the Queen of England to bribe the King of Abyssinia not to imprison and torture her subjects is, let what will be said on the matter, an indelible disgrace. In the next place, what is this

but an encouragement to seize and imprison Englishmen whenever they can be conveniently captured? When we are given, as a happy example, the mode of dealing with the brigands in Greece and Calabria, is it pretended that such a course leads to the discontinuance of brigandage? Does it not, on the contrary, feed and support it? A thousand times better do nothing, than stick up a placard over the door of our Foreign Office to make it known, that every distant barbarian who captures and tortures a certain number of Englishmen may expect a reward of ten, twenty, or thirty thousand pounds. I cannot specify the sum, because I don't know the exact amount which it is suggested we should pay for capturing and torturing British subjects, but I suppose it is intended to be something considerable."

The *Standard*, in a leading article, remarked that "it is time that the country should decide what is to be done with the Emperor Theodorus, in the matter of the British prisoners. These unfortunate victims of the angry folly of a barbarian King—and, we might add, of the negligence and blundering of Earl Russell—still continue to suffer a fate the very contemplation of which is enough to flush the cheek of every honest Englishman. The claim of these prisoners upon our nation is a claim upon our common manhood. It would be strong enough, if the victims of Theodorus were simply private citizens of England; it is so strong as to be almost irresistible when we reflect that two of them, at least, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Rassam, owe their imprisonment to their having been engaged in the public service. If it were not a question of simple humanity, it would be one of national duty to attempt their release. The lesser arguments founded on policy and expediency need hardly be urged in the presence of the simple fact, that here are a party of English citizens, kept in chains in a foul dungeon, openly and avowedly as an insult to the British Government. Can we permit this thing to be, and hold up our heads among the Powers of the earth? Regarded purely as a question of national interest, can we afford to incur this great injury to our reputation among the nations of the East? We must presume that we are all agreed that the Abyssinian Captives shall not be left to rot in their dungeons. There is only one other alternative—we must get them out by force,

or attempt to do so. An Abyssinian expedition, though difficult, is not after all a more formidable enterprise than, upon far less urgent occasions, we have several times undertaken. It is certainly not more hazardous than the war with the Sitana fanatics, under General Chamberlain; the campaign in Persia under General Outram; or that into the Waikato country under General Cameron. It is one of the penalties of an Imperial position to be exposed to such wars; and we cannot hope to escape the obligation except by incurring some evil greater than war itself. The Abyssinians are certainly not an enemy more to be dreaded than the Affghans of our north-western frontier of India, or than the Maories of New Zealand. The best and latest intelligence we have from the country, represents the population as disaffected to Theodorus, and the provinces nearly all in open rebellion. The prospect of an Abyssinian war is unwelcome; but the question is, is there a safe or honourable alternative? If there be, no one, we are convinced, will hail it more gladly than our present Foreign Minister, who is never likely to be accused of indifference to the cause of peace. But the scandal endures and grows while we are hesitating, and death may yet forestall us, of our just vengeance and our sacred duty."

This was the tone and character of almost every article, which came from the Press, both in England and in India. The Governments of neighbouring countries watched with keen interest the passing incidents of this embroglio; while the Jesuits circulated the most gloomy reports as to the certain failure and destruction which awaited an invading force. The Count du Bisson, writing in their interests, and calculating on the extirpation of the Protestant Missions and their adherents, wrote thus:—

"We will not speak of the Kadaref worm or of the tœnia; one is safe from them if one never drinks water. We will say nothing of the gigantic defiles, of the absence of roads over mountains inaccessible to Europeans, of the rains that commence in April, a frightful deluge which breaks down the strongest tents, changes rivulets into torrents and rivers into oceans, drowning the plains for two months, and leaving them during the three succeeding months ravaged by typhus and by the pernicious fevers engendered by mountains of detritus in fermentation, of carcasses of animals in putrefaction, under a sunheat of 85 deg. centigrade. We will not point out the desperate position of an invading army in a country

which has already been methodically ruined, sacked, and burnt, surrounded on all sides by pestilential marshes, hemmed in by fanatical free corps, implacable in their hatred, inexorable in their vengeance, indefatigable in their attacks; of an army cut off from its base of operations by muddy and mephitic oceans, without communications, without the possibility during one-third of the year of obtaining supplies, and consequently obliged to take with it provisions, stores, medicines, ammunition for four months. We will not dwell upon the absurdity of employing in endless defiles, strewn everywhere with rocks fallen from the mountains, a cavalry accustomed to the plains of India, draught animals accustomed to the sandy, easy paths of the Desert, in provinces where often man alone serves as beast of burden, helping himself with his feet and hands. All that, concerns the skilful English Generals, and their so well-organized Commissariat."

It was decided, that India should be the base of operations, and that a considerable number of the Native, as well as the European troops, should take part in the campaign. The reports which reached the Authorities, of the barrenness of the Abyssinian highlands, and the consequent want of supplies which they would necessarily encounter in their onward-march, led them to make extraordinary provision in regard to the Commissariat. These things involved serious and heart-breaking delays; and the faith of the anxious watchers was frequently shaken to the very foundation, as they contemplated the possible destruction of the Captives, ere succour might reach them.

A valued friend, and an officer of high rank, has, at my request, supplied me with an outline of the movements of his own Brigade, which will sufficiently explain the characteristics of the serious undertaking in which we were engaged. From his own lips, I heard also a thrilling statement, of the circumstances which accompanied the advance into the interior. But the most remarkable, and the most sacred feature of those movements, was the spirit of prayer which exercised its blessed power over the advancing hosts of Britain's power. There were among the officers of every grade, as well as in the ranks of the soldiery, a goodly company of true Christians; who knew that if the enemy were permitted to come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord would lift up the standard of successful resistance. Many a craggy nook, and many a leafy shade, bore witness to the intercessions which rose up from these "Soldiers of Christ,"



that the Lord would make them the instruments of effecting the release of His shackle-bound servants. Their own lives and safety, were subordinated in their thoughts, to the intense and anxious interest which they felt in the accomplishment of their mission.

The Illustrated Papers of that time, afforded their readers the opportunity of judging what was the character of the 400 miles of country, through which the British force had to wend its way. The graphic descriptions of Mr. Stern, were confirmed by the admirable sketches, which were supplied by the artists, who accompanied the Expedition. From a multiplicity of points, throughout the whole of those mountain ranges, a handful of determined men, might have effectually barred the approach of the British force. The conveyance of artillery in particular, would, in many places, have been simply impossible, had it not been for the ability and activity, which the Royal Engineers of the army manifested, in overcoming every difficulty. It seemed hardly possible, that any progress was likely to be made in their march, without the sacrifice of many lives.

“The British Government having determined to send an Expeditionary Force of about 12,000 men of all arms, under command of Sir Robert Napier, G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, into Abyssinia, for the purpose of liberating the Envoy and Consul of Her Majesty the Queen of England and other British subjects, kept in imprisonment and chains by Theodorus, Emperor of Abyssinia, a reconnoitring party was despatched to the coast of the Red Sea, in September, 1867, and orders issued for the departure of an advance Brigade early in October, consisting of the 1st Native Artillery and Mountain Train, 3rd Light Cavalry, 10th Regiment, 2nd Company Sappers and Miners, and 1st Division, the whole under command of Colonel Field.

“The Regiment, left Poona by rail on the afternoon of the 3rd October, to embark at Bombay for Abyssinia, it having been ordered to form part of the advance Brigade of the Expeditionary Force. On the morning of the 4th October, before embarking, it was paraded on the Esplanade, for the inspection of his Excellency Sir Robert Napier, the Commander-in-Chief, who addressed the corps in most complimentary terms, expressing perfect confidence in the good conduct and discipline of the Regiment, which had been under his eye at Poona, and saying he had selected it out of the whole army, for the purpose of leading the advance into Abyssinia. The strength of the Regiment was 640 rank and file.

“The headquarter wing embarked on board the India steamer, and the left wing, under the command of Major James, on board the Dalhousie steamer. The voyage was a prosperous one, and, after calling at Aden and remaining there two days, the steamers again started for Annerley Bay, on the coast of the Red Sea, and anchored off the port of Zoulla, on the evening of the 21st October. The shore was a shelving and shallow one, and at that time there was no pier or convenience for landing troops and stores. The disembarkation of the Advance Brigade had to be effected by great labour and personal exertion on the part of the men. Water was so scarce on shore, that it had to be landed daily for the troops and animals, as they were disembarked, and in like manner provisions; while all the regimental stores, baggage, &c., had to be brought off and landed by the Sepoys. On the morning of the 2nd November, the Regiment marched to Gormagto, at the mouth of the pass of that name, and there encamped, having first cleared the ground of dense Banbul Jungle. Here the headquarters remained for the whole of November, and the men were employed in the arduous work of making roads, both towards Zoulla and through the pass, and in clearing ground for the encampment of other regiments; the left wing was pushed on to occupy a post at Lower Soroo in the pass, and afterwards at Upper Soroo, and there it was also employed in making roads, the route being at this time simply the track of a mountain torrent impassable even for mules. It having been decided, after a careful survey, that the Gormagto pass offered the best and easiest approach to Senafe, on the highlands of Abyssinia, a distance of 63 miles from the coast. The Advance Brigade, which was commanded by Colonel Field, at the same time that he held command of the Regiment, was ordered to concentrate and march on Senafe. Friendly relations with the mountain tribes had previously been established by the political officer; but frequent reports were received in camp to the effect that large bodies of men were collecting at the head of the pass, to oppose the entrance into Abyssinia; and it was added that the Prince of Tigré intended to resist our advance. On the 28th November, the headquarters of the Regiment broke ground, and marched to Lower Soroo, where it halted two days to make the road, and then proceeded up the pass, being joined at Upper Soroo by the left wing and Native Artillery, with Mountain Train. The advance was continued to Rara Guddle, where in the narrowest part of the gorge the Regiment had to bivouac for three days without being able to pitch tents, the temperature having fallen to near freezing point. The road to the head of the pass was quickly opened by the Sappers and Miners, with two companies of the Regiment, under Major Pierce; and in the meantime an Envoy from the Prince of Tigré, with friendly overtures, arrived, and had an interview with Colonel Merewether, the Agent. All being in readiness, on the morning of the 6th December the march was re-commenced for Senafe, a distance of nine miles, two companies of the Regiment, under Major James, being

left to keep open the communication, and at two p.m. the small force had reached the head of the pass, where a number of native Chiefs had collected to give it a friendly welcome. Preceded by them, with band playing, the Brigade marched to Senafe. The early establishment of this post on the highlands was of great importance, as it not only commanded the head of the pass, and secured our communications with the coast, but proved to the people of Abyssinia that we were in earnest, and gave us the opportunity of evincing our friendly intentions towards them. The Prince of Tigré, after a period of hesitation, joined heartily in a friendly alliance, and caused a proclamation to be made, calling upon his subjects to bring in supplies, and in every way to facilitate the progress of the force through his territory. The country, from its impoverished state, was able to produce but very little corn or other supplies, excepting cattle and sheep; and the Sepoys experienced hardships in the total deprivation of all vegetables, fruit and condiments, with their daily rations of flour. At Senafe, where the Regiment remained until the end of January, 1868, it was employed in making roads and cutting down jungle; and, under the direction of Major Pierce, also huts for more than 1,000 muleteers were constructed, the whole of the wood having been cut and brought by the Sepoys from the jungle, for this purpose. To improve the water supply, wells were dug and a tank made by the men, and all ranks zealously laboured in every way to further the objects of the Expedition. Two companies of the right wing, under Major Pierce, joined a field pioneer detachment, which was ordered to open the road to Addigerat, and they left Senafe on the 18th January. The headquarters of the Regiment, with the remaining companies of the right wing, also marched from Senafe on the 20th January; but the left wing, under Major James, was ordered to remain behind to garrison that place, and it was, to the great disappointment of all ranks, kept at this post until the close of the campaign.

“The march to Addigerat was effected without any events of interest occurring, the road having been opened by the pioneer detachment, commanded by Major Pierce, and the inhabitants of the country being found friendly, and ready to bring into camp for sale what few supplies they had. Addigerat was reached on the 2nd February, and here the Regiment halted until the arrival of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, with the remainder of the 1st Brigade and a battery of Armstrong guns. One column was then pushed on to Antalo, being preceded by a pioneer detachment, to which two companies of the Regiment were again attached, and a second column, with the headquarters' camp, followed on the 6th February, this column being commanded by Colonel Field. About half-way between Addigerat and Antalo, a satisfactory interview took place between the Prince of Tigré (by name Kassa) and Sir Robert Napier; but the former found it difficult to believe that his Excellency really intended to attack and destroy King Theodorus, the tyrant of Abyssinia, and his stronghold, Magdala.

“The 1st Division of the force, under the command of Major-General Sir C. Staveley, divided into two Brigades, was organized at Antalo for the purpose of advancing on Magdala; the 2nd Division, under the command of Major-General Malcolm, holding the posts between the sea coast and Antalo. A pioneer force, to open the road, was also formed, and the command of the same given to Colonel Field, who was appointed Brigadier General, with the Adjutant of the Regiment, Captain Durand, as his Brigadier Major; and in consequence, the command of the Regiment devolved upon Major James, who joined as quickly as possible from Senafe, leaving the left wing under the command of Major Burd. The country between Senafe and Antalo was in many parts very difficult and hilly, but beyond Antalo, all the way to Magdala, a distance of about 200 miles, it was extremely mountainous, entailing great labour upon the pioneer force, there being no country roads, and a path having to be made sufficiently wide for the elephants, which were employed to carry the mortars and Armstrong guns.

“At Lat, which place was reached on the 22nd March, a new disposition of the force was made: the pioneer force was incorporated into the other Brigades, and a 3rd Brigade was formed, the command of which was given to Brigadier-General Field, who was directed to bring on the guns; the 1st and 2nd Brigades, without baggage, being pushed rapidly forward. Major James, with the headquarters' wing of the Regiment, joined the 3rd Brigade at Lat, having left behind at Antalo all sick and weakly men. Supplies for both men and officers now became scarce, the country produced next to nothing, and much privation had to be endured; the men for days having to subsist upon wheat which they roasted, or upon flour and water chupatties, without ghee or salt. All privations were cheerfully borne, and the 3rd Brigade followed the advance force as rapidly as possible; and after crossing a river and climbing a mountain to the Wadela plateau, overtook the 2nd Brigade at Santara, on the 31st March. Here orders were received for the 3rd Brigade to be amalgamated with the 1st and 2nd Brigades; consequently, General Field resumed command of the Regiment, and joined the 2nd Brigade, under Brigadier General Wilby.

“The Sepoys and followers suffered severely from the intense cold in this elevated region, 10,500 feet above the level of the sea; and the absence of firewood added greatly to their sufferings. The whole of the 1st Division moved forward to Magdala without private baggage, each soldier and Sepoy being only allowed to carry one waterproof sheet and one blanket, besides great coat; the officers being also allowed only a waterproof sheet and two blankets. Twenty men were allotted to one bell-tent, and 12 officers; and with carriage thus reduced to the lowest extent, the small attacking force pushed on in the highest spirits. The Wadela plateau was crossed in four marches, which brought the force to the precipitous descent to the Jeetta river, a narrow stream running from east to west,



between mountains rising abruptly on each side, to 3000 feet above the chasm. A wide road, which greatly facilitated the progress of the force, had been made down the mountain and up the other side, by King Theodorus, in conveying his heavy guns to Magdala; consequently, but little delay was experienced, and the force, after encountering heavy storms on the march, reached the Dalanta Plain on the 3rd April. The two Brigades encamped, for the convenience of water, on different parts of this extensive Plain, which is at a height of 10,500 feet above the level of the sea. The Division halted several days here, while supplies were being brought up from the rear, and to enable a reconnaissance to be made of the stronghold of Magdala, which was visible from the edge of the plateau, at not more than nine miles' distance, as the crow flies.

"Early on the morning of the 10th April, the 1st Brigade, under command of Brigadier General Schneider, and accompanied by Major-General Sir C. Staveley, K.C.B., was ordered to cross the Bashilo river; and after advancing, and making a close reconnaissance of the strongholds of Fallah, Selasse (where the King's camp was pitched), and Magdala, to take up a position whence operations could be conducted against the enemy. The 2nd Brigade, a few hours afterwards, also marched with orders to bivouac on the south side of the Bashilo, in support of the 1st Brigade. The descent to the Bashilo was as long and steep as that to the Jeetta river; but on the opposite side the ground towards Magdala was easier of approach. It was considered probable that the enemy would have disputed the passage of the Bashilo; but the King, confident in his host and heavy guns, and in the strength of his fortress, was content that we should advance close to his position, doubtless thinking that he would then be able more easily to destroy the small British force.

"It was about two p.m. when the King, watching from the Fallah hill the slow approach of the 1st Brigade, as it toiled over the difficult ground, and urged by his Generals and soldiers to attempt it, determined upon attacking the same. The word was given, and streaming down the slopes of the mountains, some 6,000 horse and foot of Theodorus's best soldiers, led on by his favourite General, came boldly on to attack the Brigade. No time had been lost on our side, and Colonel Penn's battery of steel guns, and the rocket battery, immediately opened fire. The 23rd Punjab Pioneers formed in skirmishing order on the left, and some companies of the 4th Foot, armed with Snider rifles, on the right of the battery; whilst the guard to the battery, consisting of two native officers and 40 men of the 10th Regiment, also joined the line, and the fire became general. Again and again the enemy came boldly to the attack, but the withering and murderous fire, which mowed them down in hundreds, soon utterly disorganized them, and caused them to retreat in confusion, being pursued into the ravines by the infantry, where many fell under the bayonet. About 500 were killed, and as





NORTH SCARP OF THE BESHILO.



many wounded, in this brilliant action, and the King and his army were alike thoroughly intimidated; whilst on our side only twelve men were wounded and none killed.

“The 2nd Brigade had during the action received orders to march forward, and during the night the 10th Regiment escorted the Armstrong guns to the front, and, with the rest of the 2nd Brigade, took up a position about three-quarters of a mile from the 1st Brigade. On the morning of the 11th, the King sent Mr. Flad and Lieut. Prideaux to the Commander-in-Chief, to request terms, admitting his defeat. A letter was returned to him, saying that the unconditional surrender of the Captives, of himself and of the fortress was demanded, and that his life should be spared, and he should be treated with honour, if he thus submitted to Her Majesty's conditions. On the afternoon of this memorable day, (April 11th, 1868) the Captives were released and sent into his Excellency's camp, to the great joy of the whole force; but the haughty Emperor would not surrender himself and fort, but continued negotiations, hoping for better terms. A period of forty-eight hours was allowed for his final decision; but as he had not yielded on the morning of Good Friday, the 13th, the two Brigades were formed up for the purpose of attacking, and carrying by assault, the mountain strongholds and fort. The 2nd Brigade, led by the 33rd Regiment, had the honour to be in front, the 1st Brigade being held in support. The 10th Regiment followed Captain Twiss's battery of steel guns, one company having been detached in support of the Armstrong gun battery, and one company to guard many soldiers of the King, who had come into our camp and laid down their arms.

“The Division marched by the King's road, which led up the steep ascent to the saddle connecting Fallah with Islamgee, and as it neared these heights, it became evident that no opposition would be offered, the enemy being visible, and crowding the rocks which commanded the road, but not attempting to impede the progress of the force. On reaching the plateau, the 33rd Regiment was at once directed to seize the Islamgee hill, and the headquarters, with two companies of the 10th Regiment, to occupy Fallah, which was the key of the position, and commanded Magdala. The Regiment quickly seized this hill, and found it deserted, two brass 18-pounders, which had opened fire on the 10th inst. on the 1st Brigade, having been left behind by the enemy. In the meantime, Theodoros's boastful warriors had laid down their arms before the Commander-in-Chief, and then were ordered to leave the hill, together with the multitude of women and children, whilst their arms, many thousands in number, were collected into heaps, and placed under guards. It was at first reported, that the King had fled with a few followers, but as the troops approached the fort, some shots were fired from it, and it became known that he had shut himself up with a few faithful chiefs and soldiers, and would defend it to the last

extremity. The Armstrong guns having been sent for, and placed in position, and the two steel mountain train and rocket batteries having likewise been made ready, fire was opened upon the fort and gateway, and the two Brigades—the 2nd for the attack and the 1st in support—were formed up ready for the assault opposite the N. E. gate. The 10th Regiment had been recalled from Fallah, and ordered to occupy Islamgee, which overlooked the attack on the fort. After the batteries had maintained their fire for about an hour, the assault was ordered. The 33rd Regiment, with a party of Royal Engineers, gallantly led the same. The opposition was very feeble, whereas the fire from the Snider rifle was tremendous; and under cover of the same, some of the foremost soldiers soon forced their way through the walls, built of stones topped with bushes, which flanked the gateway; and almost the first sight which presented itself was the dead body of the King, lying on the road between the two gates. It soon became evident that he had shot himself through the mouth with his own hand, when he found further resistance was hopeless. The few of his soldiers who had remained faithful, had nearly all been killed; and the fort was immediately taken possession of, a large body of men who had taken no part in the action, quietly laying down their arms. The loss on our side during the assault was only one officer wounded in the arm, and some three or four men wounded. Forty pieces of cannon, large and small, were taken, besides a large store of ammunition; but no treasure was discovered, or other prize property of value, excepting the spoil of the Churches of Gondar, in silver crosses and ornaments, and the crown and state seal, &c. of the King. The next day the Queen and son of Theodorus were escorted to the Commander-in-Chief's camp, and the body of the King was buried in the Church within the fort. Ninety-one state prisoners, many of them Chiefs of note, were released from their cruel captivity, and preparations were at once made for the return march of the force.

“During the next few days, the heavy guns which had so long been the boast of Theodorus and the terror of Abyssinia, were destroyed, and all the houses in Magdala, and the defences, were burnt and blown up, and completely destroyed. On the 17th, the force commenced its return march, the 2nd Brigade leading, the 23rd Regiment Pioneers and Sappers having the day previous gone on. The liberated Captives, about 60 in number, were divided between the two Brigades, for the convenience of transport and protection, and the troops, elated with the wonderful success which God had vouchsafed to them, prepared cheerfully to meet the fatigue and privations which had to be encountered during the 200 miles' march to Antalo, where was the first large depôt of supplies. On the Dalanta Plain, a halt of two days took place, and on one of these days a grand field-day was held, when the Commander-in-Chief having formed the troops into a square, the Captives being present, caused his Adjutant-General to read out a general order,



expatiating upon the success which had crowned the efforts of the force ; and his Excellency then addressed all ranks, in grateful and complimentary terms, thanking at the same time the Foreign officers who had accompanied the Expedition.

“The march was daily prosecuted without halts, it being of great importance for the force to get out of the mountainous region before the setting in of the rains, which were close at hand. The troops suffered much from the inferior quality, as well as the want of the full ration of daily food. Storms were of frequent occurrence, and the encamping grounds were often wet and under water. The object of the Expedition, however, had been gained, and all ranks marched cheerfully forward, submitting to every privation without a murmur. On the 9th May, the 2nd Brigade arrived at Antalo, and a rest of several days’ halt and full rations of food, greatly revived and benefited the troops. Senafe was reached on the 24th May, by easy marches, and on the following day the head wing of the Regiment continued its march through the pass to Goomaglo and Zoulla, the left wing, under command of Major Burd, having previously marched to the coast, and embarked for Bombay on the 13th May. On the morning of the 28th May, the head wing proceeded by rail from Gormaglo to Zoulla, and at once embarked on board the transport steamer *American*, which sailed for Bombay on the 30th of the same month.

This is a condensed account of the movements of the troops, both in their advance and retirement from this picturesque but inhospitable land. The opposition of the Prince of Tigré was the greatest difficulty which threatened their progress, and this it has been seen was overcome. The interview of the Commander-in-Chief with this semi-barbarous potentate is given in detail in the following passage :—

“By this time the Abyssinian line was within a hundred yards of the stream. It suddenly opened out in the centre, and Kassa, surrounded by his immediate counsellors and guard, rode forward on a white mule, with a crimson umbrella borne above his head. He forded the stream, and was received by Sir Robert Napier. Mutual salutations were exchanged, which no doubt were quite as sincere as those in daily vogue in the civilized world. Kassa is a young man of thirty-five years of age. His face, of a dark olive colour, is intellectual ; but he has a careworn and wearied expression, which justifies his statement that he did not desire power, but that it was thrust upon him by the people of Tigré. He wore the Abyssinian costume, a white robe or toga, embroidered with crimson round his body, and the flowered silk shirt which marks those high in office. His dark black hair was arranged in careful plaits, which, drawn back from the forehead, are tied by a piece of ribbon round the back of the neck. The conversation was conducted through an



interpreter. Prince Kassa was ceremoniously conducted into the General's tent, where a long conference was held, with the most satisfactory results. Having received some presents, a horse, a double-barrelled rifle, and glass vases, he promised his aid to the Expedition in the matter of food and forage. An inspection of the British troops then took place, after which Sir Robert Napier was invited to come across and enter Kassa's tent. At the farther side of the circular tent was a small couch covered with silk cloth, on which the Prince took his seat, and placed Sir Robert Napier at his side. The Abyssinian officers of high grade sat round the tent, on the floor, at the left-hand side of their Chief, while the English seated themselves on the ground, to the left of their Commander. Girls, bearing large baskets of Abyssinian bread and curry, came in, and placed them on the ground in front of the visitors. The bread was brown, formed in flat circular cakes about a foot in diameter, and had a slightly sour taste. After enough had been eaten, other girls entered, bearing huge bullock-horns filled with 'tedj,' a drink made of fermented honey. This was poured into Florence flasks, and given to each guest. After a while, when many flasks had been emptied, musicians were introduced. The band consisted of six men, who played on long pipes, which uttered wild but not unpleasant music. A war song was sung by a minstrel, and all the Abyssinians joined in chorus. The entertainment was now drawing to a close, and the presents were brought in, to be bestowed upon the British Commander. He was first invested with a silver-gilt armlet, the sign of a great warrior. Then a lion's skin and mane, the mark of a fierce fighter in battle, were placed upon his shoulders; a sword was girt upon his side, and a spear and shield for him were handed to one of his staff, who acted on the occasion as his armour-bearer. The meeting then broke up. Kassa, after frequent handshaking, accompanied the General to the door of the tent, where a grey mule, caparisoned with Abyssinian saddlery and trappings, was waiting. On this Sir Robert Napier had to mount; and, again accompanied by the Abyssinian army, rode down to the Diab, where the Abyssinians halted. The English General and his staff rode into their own camp."

During this advance, other events were transpiring within the walls of Magdala, and in the adjacent provinces, which demand a separate and particular narration.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE.

The observant eye of the servant of God, will never fail to trace, the varied, and sometimes obscure manner, in which the Lord accomplishes His purposes. "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

The cruelties and unrestrained violence of Theodorus had alienated many of his warmest adherents :—the defection of many tribes, had led the most formidable of the surrounding States to conclude, that his was "a falling cause." This will in a great measure account for the free and unmolested advance of the British troops, and the friendly reception which they had experienced on their march. The King himself was infatuated with the idea, that the cannon cast by his European workmen would spread death and destruction on every side, and secure the annihilation of the British Force. One mortar in particular, was of unusual size; and most tedious was the process by which it was necessary to drag it from Debra Tabor, in conveying it to Magdala, along craggy paths and perilous mountain passes. The savage Monarch was thereby delayed, through many a weary week, in his approach to the scene of his expected victories; and the anxious Captives were thereby preserved from a dreaded presence, which might have precipitated their destruction. These difficulties were multiplied, by the harassing attacks to which Theodorus and his troops were exposed, at the hands of their continually increasing enemies; and the frequent desertion of others, who felt that at any time, they might become the objects of his unrestrained vengeance.

"The rebellion of Begemeder, the only province that had hitherto continued loyal, ought to have taught the tyrant to adopt a more conciliatory policy. Impelled by the demon of vengeance, he ruthlessly pursued his path athwart smouldering villages and grim and ghastly charnel-houses, the fell work of his own murderous hands. Cowed by the energetic resistance of frenzied peasants, he withdrew from the butcheries in the open field to the less dangerous carnage in his own fenced camp. On the 7th of June, upwards of six hundred and seventy of Wadela, Yedshou, and other troops, under the false pretext that they were to receive their pay, appeared unarmed before the tyrant. 'Aha, you vile slaves,' was the address, 'I hear you want to join the rebels and fight against me. I will feed the hyænas with your foul carcasses before you execute your designs. Off with the traitors.' In an instant they were in the grasp of friends, companions, and kinsmen, who, strange as it may appear, readily performed the executioner's work.

"These wholesale butcheries roused friend and foe to a sense of their danger. Ras Adalou, the Chief of the Yedshou troops, on the eve after the massacre of the Wadeans and their companions, mounted his horse, and calling on his retainers to follow him, they all in a body marched out of the hedged-in camp. Theodorus saw them turning their backs upon him, but he had not heart to pursue the desperate bands, who were determined to sell their liberty and lives at no mean price.

"The defection of Ras Adalou intensified the rage and despair of the tyrant. Day after day, men, women and children were indiscriminately subjected to the most appalling tortures, or condemned to a horrible death. Within four weeks, according to the statement of eye-witnesses, upwards of three thousand persons perished by the sword, the rope, whip, stick and mutilating knife.

"This homicidal mania became more ungovernable as the victims multiplied. No one was safe. The executioner of to-day bled on the morrow. Accuser and accused frequently perished by the same knife and hand. Near and around the camp, all was one large field of death and corruption. The very air was tainted with the poison of the putrescent corpses, and the slain themselves threatened the retributive vengeance, which the living were too recreant to inflict.

"Terrorism had decimated the camp. The tyrant himself was amazed at the abject servility of the men, who, to retain his favour, would betray friends and relations to a most appalling death, without remorse or regret. He had effectually crushed treachery and eradicated opposition. To go further he did not deem advisable. The Chiefs and their retainers who still remained attached to him, any fresh violence he thought might justly awake from their stupid torpor, and prompt to acts of desperation, he shuddered to contemplate. Where was he, however, to find victims to quell the fiery tempest that was devouring his soul?

“In the plain of Efag, a day’s journey to the north-west of Debra Tabor, nestling amidst groves and a few isolated hills, that impart a picturesqueness to the scene, stood about a dozen villages, which by fortuitous circumstances escaped the general devastation. The infatuated people, confiding in the swiftness of their mules, the weakness of the despoiler, or, perhaps the support of a rebel Chief, made no efforts to secure either their property or their lives. The rumoured approach of the tyrant, however, frightened them; and all hurried away in the direction of Woggera, where *Taousie Gobazie*, an insurgent leader, had his camp. Theodorus, who was informed by his spies of the emigration of these peasants, despatched some of his Chiefs with the most friendly and paternal messages. The insane victims of oppression and tyranny, instead of scorning the treacherous protestations of the false King, listened to them with unsuspecting trust. Back to the deserted homes rolled the tide of the migratory host. Their mules were unloaded; their grain stowed into the empty *godahs*; and their flocks sent to graze on the adjacent rich meadows. No fear disturbed their repose. The solemn declaration of a master who had never kept his promise, acted like a fatal spell on the doomed multitude. They spread their hides on the floors of their huts, and wrapped their shamas tightly round—and slept. It was their last repose on earth. The men of violence and blood were upon them, and before another grey dawn had dissipated the blackness of night, they were all burnt and charred corpses. A few persons only escaped the fury of the destroyers, and the account they had to give of the scene, surpassed in horror the most fiendish massacres ever enacted before. No one was spared; the weak and the strong, youth and age, were all mercilessly consumed beneath the roofs which had given them a shelter and a home. Little children, frightened by the conflagration, here and there rushed out of their huts in the vain hope of escaping the devouring element; instantly a cruel spear tossed them in the air, and they fell shrieking amidst the raging flames. From Efag, the blood-drenched ruffianly band hurried on to Derita, a large village of wealthy Mahommedan merchants. Here they intended to perpetrate the same hideous atrocities, but the inhabitants had forestalled them the savage pleasure by a timely flight up the Woggera plateau. It was in this very village that a messenger from Massowah, with the ultimatum from England, had taken refuge. He evidently intended to execute the errand on which he had been sent, had not a wholesome terror of the tyrant’s wrath deterred him. We were in raptures when the intelligence reached us. The tyrant was then in no mood to receive menacing despatches. He wanted blood, and the most cautiously worded communication would, humanly speaking, have decided our fate. God was always good and merciful to us.

“Elated with his base and dastardly massacre of men, women, and children, the robber Chief—he was in reality no longer King—

thought that he might again try his fortune upon stronger and more honourable battle-fields. Belessa, two days' journey to the north-east of Debra Tabor, a small mountainous province, abounding in grain, flocks, and herds, offered the tempting bait. Stimulated by greed and rapacity, his pillage-loving bands pressed forward to seize the anticipated spoil. Lidj Abitou, the chief of our escort on the unfortunate day we left Quarata, but then a rebel, together with his father, a former prison companion at Magdala during our first captivity, and the brave peasants, anticipated the bloodthirsty depredators, and boldly confronted them. The cowardly braggart, who could riot in the throes of shackled captives and defenceless unarmed peasants, at the sight of a determined foe, paltroon like, shrunk from the contest. His followers, panting for booty, manifested even more daring than their swaggering leader. 'Let us advance,' shouted a few of the boldest Chiefs, 'and these rebels will be scattered to the wind.' 'I know what you want,' said the grinning savage, as it was related to us by eye-witnesses, 'but you shall not have your wish.'

"Chafed and galled in spirit, the worthy Theodorus, followed by the imprecations and curses of an enraged people, retraced his steps to Debra Tabor. 'Light the fires, smelt the metal, cast the big Sebastopol, and I will destroy my enemies!' were the orders now issued to his servile European workmen, who sometime before, had been removed from their comfortable homes at Gaffat to the putrescent camp at Debra Tabor. Up circled the flame of the heated furnace; down into the round-shaped form poured the molten metal. Oh! there was a hissing and battering, a whirling and whizzing in that Debra Tabor foundry, that eclipsed all that had ever been seen in Abyssinia. The Frendjoj were perfect wizards. It could no longer be denied that they had deserved those dollars which oppressed subjects were so unwilling to resign, and envious soldiers—foolish men—grudged to see so worthily bestowed. There! Look at the Sebastopol, that big yawning monster; and does not the very sight amply repay all that was ever bestowed on its makers? The tyrant was in ecstasy. 'Let the wide mouth of that glittering giant only vomit forth its contents, and death and destruction will hurl into everlasting darkness the foes who dare to fight for life and home.'

"The number of Europeans in the camp at this period amounted to twenty-seven, of whom fifteen were men, three women, and nine children. M. Makerer and McKelvie, who were formerly our Magdala companions, volunteered to enter the royal service, and this exempted them from chains, and a second transportation to the fortress. Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis, the missionary agents of a Scotch Society, and two hunters, Schiller and Essler, after much hesitation and many excuses, were ordered to assist their brethren in the work of the foundry. Weary of a wretched bondage, and perhaps, too, a little apprehensive of coming events, the last four,



together with Makerer, resolved to seek freedom and liberty in flight. M. Bardel, who had first suggested the plan, was admitted into the secret, and he manifested the utmost eagerness that its execution should not be delayed. Bardel, Staiger, and Brandeis, were to start together, and so also the rest, to avoid all observation. With their money, which was very little, round the waist, and some bread in their pockets, they impatiently awaited the moment fixed for starting. The hour at last approached, and their hearts bounded with joy at the prospect of deliverance. Suddenly there is heard the tramp of feet, the hum of voices, and the rattle of shields and spears. The would-be fugitives turn pale; the cold perspiration stands on their brows; they tremble, nay, almost faint, for the King, with his myrmidons, and their accuser, Bardel, stands before them.

“The tyrant’s eye vindictively gleamed on the prisoners, while he sternly demanded why they were so ungrateful, and wanted to run away. The reply that they wished to see their country, of course did not satisfy their interrogator, and they were all put in chains. The poor servants, who were utterly ignorant of their intentions, did not get off so easily. Two of them were fearfully tortured, and ere the wounds had healed, they were, together with four companions (one a native of Massowah), publicly executed. Their countrymen, and particularly their brethren, of whom four were the King’s chief workmen, took not the slightest notice of them for many, many torturing months. They had incurred the royal displeasure, and like the Magdala Captives, were to be shunned as if the very chains communicated a dangerous contagion.”

On Friday, December 13th (1867), the first tidings reached the Captives that the British Expedition was on its way.

“Messengers from the coast arrived about noon; but it was not before evening that the letters were smuggled into our prison. There were, as usual, none for me. A kind of fatality hung over my letters. My friends wrote, but of the scores which they forwarded, not a tithe ever reached me. Vexed and annoyed, I snatched up a fragment of Guizot’s ‘*Histoire de la Civilisation*,’ which Mr. Rosenthal had secured during his stay at Gaffat, and began to study the influence of monasticism on the moral and social condition of Europe. A summons, to come immediately to Dr. Blanc’s hut, was significant of good news. The clapping and cheering of several of my companions, confirmed my anticipation. ‘Cheer up, Stern!’ exclaimed the doctor. ‘Good news! Troops are coming! Colonel Merewether has landed! Hurrah for old England!’ The budget was worthy of the plaudits it elicited from the Captives. Oh, it was a happy evening, that 13th of November! Gloom and despondency had entirely vanished. No vacant glance, no dejected countenance, no shaded brow was visible among the eight victims of Theodorus’ tyranny. Our chains were light, our hearts merry;

we were in a transport of delirious joy—a sensation to which the majority, for more than four years, had been perfect strangers.

“British troops and King Theodorus were now both on the road to Magdala. But who will arrive first? Will our expected liberators forestall our dreaded captor, or will they allow him to inundate the Amba with blood ere they make their appearance? Such and similar reflections forced themselves very soon on our minds, and filled us with intense anxiety and suspense. Never were the chances of freedom and death so equally balanced; never were the steps of friend and foe so eagerly watched. We were approaching the goal of our suffering, the crisis of our fate. A tranquil confidence, that the days of banishment and exile were drawing to a close, however, dissipated those gloomy forebodings, which horrible tortures, ten times worse than death, conjured before the mind. We felt, at least most of us felt, that God had been and would be with us, and this conviction shed a peaceful serenity over our dismal prison home.

“Christmas, that season of joy and gladness, had now set in. The Expeditionary forces, to our disappointment, we heard the evening before, had not yet quite landed, whilst King Theodorus, whose advent we dreaded, was persistently threading his way through bristling lines of cowardly insurgents towards our Amba. Our felicitations on the morning of that happy day, were not much associated with the glorious events it is designed to commemorate. Our minds were occupied with King Theodorus and his movements. Various conflicting reports had reached our Amba, and they formed the themes of general discussion. It was said, that Daunt and Dalanta, two rebel districts that occupy the plateau between the Djiddah and Beshilo, had accepted the royal amnesty, and made their submission; then, that three hundred rebels had been caught, and roasted alive; and lastly, that his Majesty, in the profound consciousness of the inviolability of the law, as a warning and example to his faithless subjects, had immolated, on a flaming pyre, Ras Meshasha, the Prince Imperial. These rumours were followed by others of a less appalling import. A large proportion of the Daunt and Dalanta peasantry, it was true, had made their submission to the King; a few rebels had also been executed; but the story about the royal Prince was what we ought to have expected, a most unworthy libel.

“Our anticipations that Daunt and Dalanta, would continue to form an impassable barrier to the King's progress were disappointed, and day after day we heard, that he was advancing nearer and nearer to our rocky home. The road was still a serious obstacle to his onward movement; but with the assistance of the peasantry, who had returned to their allegiance, basalt rocks were blasted and levelled, trees cut down, and every impediment in his march removed. To hurry on the work, the Lord's-day rest, which had

hitherto been respected, more from sheer necessity than any religious scruples, was now suspended; and Europeans as well as natives had to ply the axe and hammer on the Christian's Sabbath.

"The stupid and infatuated peasants, to compensate for their late defection, exerted themselves to the utmost to retain the favourable opinion of their capricious, whimsical, and faithless master.

"At his own particular request, the Chiefs remained in the camp, while the people carried his baggage, assisted in making the road, and, together with his ragamuffins, *alias* soldiers, dragged his unwieldy cannons up to their own verdant plain. Praises the most lavish and profuse, were abundantly bestowed on the good and loyal Dalanta peasantry. They were liege subjects, excellent fathers, and most exemplary men—nay, on the last Sunday before the Abyssinian Lent, during a *broundo* (raw meat) feast, he assured the village authorities that they and their descendants, and the district entrusted to their charge, should, to the very end of time, enjoy immunities and privileges the most glorious and distinguished a Monarch could bestow.

"Thinking, that his wily smiles and glib tongue had dispelled every apprehension of treachery, he gave secret orders to his banditti to fall, before the dawn of day, upon the sleeping peasantry, and to despoil them of their property. The plan was well conceived, but not so easily carried into effect. The slumbering though surprised people were not quite unprepared; so that the ruffians, before they could execute their fell purpose, had to struggle, and that most fiercely, with their stout-hearted, obstinate victims. Numbers of the King's people were knocked down by the heavy, knotted clubs of the vigorous peasantry; others were brained by the infuriated women; and not a few, even in the camp itself, were stretched upon the ground, never to rise again, by the frantic Chiefs whom they sought to make their prisoners. The Daunt, and scores of the Wadela people, on hearing the war-whoop, hurried (an unusual thing in that reft and selfish country), to the assistance of their neighbours, and by their united efforts drove the bragging and treacherous robber Chief behind the shelter of his artillery.

"This last defeat made him conscious of the utter helplessness of his position; and, like ourselves, he was anxious for the approach of the British troops, whose advent he knew would terminate the destructive and unequal conflict in which the captor and captured, the spoiler and spoiled, were mutually involved. Now and then, he indulged in a little harmless brag about Pharaoh and the Israelites, David and Goliath, Sennacherib and Zedekiah, and on one occasion, he spoke of himself as a man, who, like Simeon in days of yore, was waiting for help, deliverance, and redemption.

"Towards his European workmen he began to manifest an unwonted severity. The motives for this sudden resentment against

his obsequious white slaves, were, of course, shrouded in some obscurity; but it was evident, that an under-current of suppressed anger had long lurked in his heart against them, and that policy, and not regard, had induced him to maintain a sham friendly intercourse with them. One day, on the plain of Dalanta, he was exceedingly indignant against them. Old Shimper, who, for some special services he had rendered, came in for a considerable share of abuse, on beholding the lance in the royal hand quivering before his eyes, already imagined himself a dead man, and in his terror, or perhaps to avert the catastrophe, apparently tumbled senseless on the hard ground. Only a few weeks before, when the rest got gorgeous tents, which they were to pitch and not to occupy—probably to excite the jealousy of the soldiers against them—he was, by some oversight, forgotten. To twist the mistake into a well-shaped compliment, he told the King that he did not require a tent, as everyone knew that his Majesty's vast and generous heart was his shelter and home. Poor sycophant! he was ungraciously rewarded for the incense of flattery, he undertook to lavish so profusely on the Moloch he pretended to adore."

On Sunday, March 29th (1868), the King arrived at Magdala. At times he professed to be favourably affected towards Mr. Rassam and the Captives, and then would outpour the venom which filled his heart, in abuse and blasphemy. How perilously near the European Captives were to the most cruel and ignominious death, will appear from what follows. It would be difficult to find, in the history of the most savage races, the parallel to the merciless atrocities which distinguished this atrocious tyrant.

"About sunset on April 6th, we received an intimation, that, on the following morning, all the prisoners, Europeans and natives, would have to repair to the royal camp. We did not much appreciate this impending change from a dingy prison-hut to a tented camp confinement. It was a sad exit that awaited us next day. We had a considerable number of friends on the Amba, and many of these repaired at an early hour to the open space in front of our prison, to see us taking our departure. They all looked sad, disconsolate, and sorrowful; and it was evident, from the sighs and irrepressible tears of the multitude, what doom they imagined would be our lot. The native prisoners, between four and five hundred, who, owing to their hand and foot chains, in a bent and stooping posture shuffled on in our rear, heaved the deepest and most heart-rending groans and sighs. Their eyes were riveted on us with an agonizing interest, for they knew that the reception accorded to us, would be the verdict of their own fate. To the joy and delight of our friends, and the numerous victims of lawless tyranny, his Majesty gave us a most friendly salutation. On perceiving my long



hair, which I had allowed to grow unclipped, as a protection to the neck from heat and cold, he smilingly turned his eyes on me, and said: 'O Cocab, why have you plaited your hair?' Samuel forestalled my response, by replying: 'Your Majesty, it is not plaited; it falls naturally over his shoulders.'

"The bustle and tumult, din and confusion, which prevailed near the spot where we were standing, induced the King to move out of the heaving and toiling multitude by whom he was encompassed. The officials followed, but the rest of the Captives kept at a respectful distance. His Majesty was exceedingly affable, courteous and polite. He dilated on all sorts of topics, but the tenor of his conversation was so incoherent, that his efforts—and he was a master in disguising his real sentiments—failed to conceal the conflicting thoughts that occupied his mind. After an hour's interview, he ordered us all to repair to a gorgeous tent, which, in the absence of Mr. Rassam's, had been erected for our accommodation.

"After this interview with his white Captives, he compensated himself for the little self-denial his courtesy had imposed, by a good deal of bluster and brag, on the victories and triumphs he was about to achieve. Amongst other things he said: 'The English, ever since the time of Noah, have cast cannons, and manufactured guns and powder, whilst we only commenced yesterday; but don't be afraid; we shall strip them of their arms, and you will be clad in their gay and gorgeous garments.' Such, and a variety of similar effusions came flowing from his lips, in smooth and well-shaped phrases, till, weary with the effort, he dismissed his bands, and mounting his mule, proceeded, accompanied by his European workmen and several Chiefs, up to the summit of Salasie, from whence he had a full view of the onward movement of the Expeditionary force.

"Next day, a messenger brought a letter from Sir Robert, now Lord Napier of Magdala. The road to the very camp, being infested by robbers and insurgents, it was necessary to stitch the missive in a seam of the bearer's ragged inexpressibles, to ensure its safety. Theodorus was quite indignant at receiving a small note, instead of a large letter. He was told, it was not disrespect, but necessity, that had compelled the Commander-in-Chief to send such an epistle. 'It is true,' he responded, 'the road is full of thieves and robbers, but who is this man that addresses himself to me? I wrote some years ago to his Queen, and she did not answer me; does he suppose that I shall enter into a correspondence with him? Take the paper away, I don't want to see it.' This was, however, merely bluster, for when the messenger and his own Chiefs had retired, he sent for Samuel, and requested to know the contents of Lord Napier's despatch.

"In the afternoon of the same day, he was angry, passionate, and savage. To quell the fury of his wrath, it was necessary that blood



should flow. He had not yet decided on the massacre of his prisoners, but to appease the demon that devoured his heart, a few victims had to be sacrificed. Seven individuals were immediately selected for a holocaust, to pacify the blood-thirsty Moloch. Among the innocent sufferers, was a young woman and her infant, the wife of the fugitive Becherwand Confou, who had decamped in September last. Ever since the flight of her husband, she had been a prisoner; and probably the long reprieve she had experienced, led her to cherish the pleasing illusion, that her young life, and that of her babe, would not be sacrificed to the despot's resentment. Poor woman—like hundreds more—she dreamt of life, freedom, and happiness, till the executioner dragged her and the innocent creature clasped in her slender arms, to a horrible and cruel death.

“These incipient butcheries were merely a prelude to still greater atrocities, and more extensive massacres. In the afternoon of the next day, we were suddenly startled by the sound of an intermittent musketry fire. I looked out of the tent to see whether the King was bragging. The rush of armed soldiers from every part of the camp, indicated that something serious and disastrous was taking place. All was hushed, as if the silencer of all sounds, had suddenly traversed those lines of huts and tents, in which noise and clamour perpetually reigned. The rattle of musketry, blended with the yells of despair, and the shouts of rage, fell, however, with an ominous and appalling horror on our ears. ‘What is the matter?’ I inquired of my neighbour. ‘Hist,’ was the response, ‘the king is killing all the prisoners.’ These terrible words diffused an aguish chill through my very heart. ‘What!’ I involuntarily ejaculated, ‘killing his prisoners—men whose only crime consists in their having served, and served faithfully, too, a tyrant to whom they ought never to have tendered allegiance?’ Most of the sufferers were our former companions in the common gaol, which deepened the sympathy we felt for them in their last mortal struggle. The sun had already disappeared from the horizon, and twilight spread a dismal, dusky hue over the scene around, and still the firing continued unabated. With night, it gradually diminished; and then only isolated shots reverberated across the panic-stricken camp.

“The slaughter lasted about three hours, and during that interval, three hundred and seven human beings were, unwarned, and perhaps unprepared, hurled into eternity. Some of the prisoners did not unresistingly yield to their woeful doom. One, Immer Ali, a native of Ferga, near the Tzana Lake, formerly a Chief of consideration in his province; in spite of hand and foot chains, with a convulsive grasp dragged his executioner towards the precipice over which he was to be hurled. The ruffian, who dreaded the doom which he intended to inflict on his fellow man, shouted for help. On hearing the cry, the tyrant, tiger-like, sprang forward, and with his gory sword literally hacked the man to pieces. One victim after another, lay writhing and quivering in their last pangs at the foot of

the dizzy precipice, and still the tyrant's rage was unappeased. 'Bring the white men, and let their blood flow, mingled with that of my own subjects,' was the order that fell from his lips. Already, we were informed, whole bands of ruffians stood prepared to seize the intended prey, when several Chiefs, no friends of the foreign Captives, stepped forward, and requested that our execution might be deferred till next day. 'Your Majesty,' they respectfully remarked, 'the white men do not deserve the easy death of the sword and bullet; no, keep them till to-morrow, and then let the slow torture of a flaming hut put an end to their existence.' 'You are right,' was the response.

"We were not unconscious of the perils by which we were encompassed; still we could scarcely realize that our lives were suspended on such a slender thread. One minute's silence, one repressed sentence of the Chiefs, and the gulf between time and eternity would have been crossed. When the above fact was narrated to me by one of my companions, I was utterly lost in bewildering amazement. Our Heavenly Father, I knew, had more than once interposed between us and a violent death; but such a visible display of His guardian care and protection, overwhelmed me with a feeling of awe, akin to that which the high priest must have experienced, when he entered the holy of holies, and stood in the immediate presence of the Shechinah."

The scene within the walls of Magdala, must be further described by the versatile pen of Mr. Stern, but the scene which was witnessed on the heights which surrounded the almost inaccessible fortress, must in addition be again given by another hand. The most solemn Anniversary in the history of the Christian Church, was accompanied by events, which afford a moral representation of the resurrection of the chain-bound Captives, who had so long been living on the confines of eternity.

"The following day was Good Friday, which the Abyssinian Church most strictly observes. The tyrant, though a perfect fiend and coarse blasphemer, repaired, from a superstitious impulse, at a very early hour to church. On his return, he sent word to Mr. Rassam that we should without delay repair to our Amba prison. It was a delightful message, and I believe no prisoners ever returned to their dungeons with greater joy, than the white Captives did to their huts on the fortress of Magdala. The very walls of those dismal abodes, which before imparted a desponding melancholy to our minds, on that very morning, beamed with a peace and serenity that sent back to our cold hearts a warm tide of gladness and joy, to which, for a long, long time, they had been perfect strangers. It was a perfect bliss to quit the royal charnel-house, and to breathe once more, if even for a few hours, an atmosphere not impregnated with blood and death.

"In the afternoon of the same day, we heard that a Division of the Expeditionary force had approached to within two hours of our fortress. Some of our servants who had followed us, came every instant into our huts with some intelligence, about the dress, looks, and attitude of the soldiers, whom their piercing glances detected on the heights around Arogie. Samuel, who was justly afraid, lest their observations should be reported, and draw on us the tyrant's resentment, ordered none to move out of their tents, if they dreaded the whip.

"Between three and four p.m., the boom of a sound like distant thunder, which the rocks and cliffs reverberated for miles and miles around the isolated Amba, made us all start to our feet. 'Was that rattle a peal of thunder, or the roar of cannon?' formed the question of every lip. Again and again, the sky above awakened the sleeping echoes of the surrounding scenes, intermingled apparently with other sounds than those created by the shadowy and hazy clouds that hung pall-like over our homes. It was now no longer doubtful, that the royal artillery was in full play, and that the King was either bragging, or engaged in a regular fight. We could not believe that he had ventured to measure his strength with disciplined troops, and the victorious *li-li-lil*, which floated from the royal camp up to the fortress, where every woman and child repeated the shrill notes, till they were hoarse from the exertion, rendered the very thought ridiculous and absurd. At ten o'clock in the evening, Messrs. Flad, Waldemeier, and several of the King's servants, came to our prison to announce to us the cheering intelligence, that a fight had taken place, and that his Majesty's troops had sustained a most signal and fatal defeat. The crest-fallen tyrant, who, only little more than eighteen months before, claimed the universe for his realm, had learnt a lesson from the destructive contest at Arogie which, had it been administered to him a few years before, might have spared Abyssinia an incalculable amount of bloodshed, misery, and desolation. 'Once I thought,' was the message to Mr. Rassam, 'that your people were women, and could not stand before me, but I find that they are men. I have been beaten by the *fit aurari* (advanced guard). My musketeers are dead. Prove that you are my friend, and reconcile me with the man who is stronger than I.' Mr. Rassam returned a polite and most judicious reply. He informed the King, that the object of his mission had been the re-establishment of peace between England and Abyssinia, and that although he had failed in achieving this end, he was still as friendly disposed as ever, and if his Majesty was inclined to listen to his counsel, he would advise him to give up to the Commander-in-Chief all the prisoners. Not to irritate the chafed lion, he, however, proposed to send Lieut. Prideaux as his envoy to Sir Robert Napier, if his Majesty consented to send one of the Europeans, and some of his own Chiefs to accompany him.

“Excited by drink, his Majesty, when the delegates returned, had become oblivious of the errand on which they had been despatched. Towards dawn, the fumes of the alcohol evaporated, and the messengers received instructions to depart for the British camp.

“Sir Robert Napier was exceedingly attentive and courteous towards the native envoy, Dejatch Alamie. His affability did not, however, modify his demands for the surrender of all the Europeans, and the unconditional submission of Theodorus to the Queen of England, who would award him honourable treatment.

“Persuaded, that all negotiations would be futile if these conditions were not promptly complied with, the delegates hurried back to the royal camp. During the interval King Theodorus dictated a semi-defiant letter to the Commander-in-Chief. ‘You,’ he wrote, ‘have prevailed against me. . . . Believing myself to be a great lord I gave you battle, but by reason of the worthlessness of my artillery, all my pains were as nought. The people of my country by taunting me with having embraced the religion of the Franks, and by saying that I had become a Mussulman, and in ten different ways, provoked me to anger against them. Out of the evil I have done to them may God bring good. . . . Since the day of my birth till now, no man has dared to lay hand on me. Wherever my soldiers began to waver in battle, it was mine to arise and rally them. Last night the darkness hindered me from doing so. . . . I had hoped, after subduing all my enemies in Abyssinia, to lead my people against Jerusalem, and to expel from it the Turks. A warrior who has dandled strong men in his arms like infants, will never suffer himself to be dandled in the arms of others.’ This document, together with a letter he had received from Sir Robert Napier, were handed to the messengers. Before, however, finally dismissing them, he inquired what honourable treatment of himself and family signified; and on not receiving the desired explanation, he turned to those who surrounded him, and ironically remarked: ‘Does the man know anything about my family that he speaks of honourable treatment? Has he counted the number of my wives and children?’

“Impassive to a degree, that rendered us almost, if not altogether impervious to those fluctuations of hope and fear, which, under ordinary circumstances, might have agitated our whole being to a feverish pitch, we passed our forenoon in comparative peace and tranquility.

“The messengers had been gone about two hours, when the King, goaded to despair by the mad fury that burned in his heart, seized a pistol, and dashing the muzzle into his mouth, wanted to put an end to his own existence. Several of his Chiefs promptly wrenched the weapon out of his hand. In the struggle, the pistol exploded, and inflicted a wound on the royal ear. The Chiefs, who were all deeply affected, urged him to shake off all despondency,



and to prove himself worthy of the name he bore. 'Our lives are yours,' they said, 'and we will fight, and if necessary, die with you. Let us bravely defy the Frendjoj, and if they venture to approach, they shall have dead and not living captives.' To this honest remonstrance—and it was honest, for they fell fighting at his side during the capture of Magdala—he deigned no reply; but turning to Betwodet Hassanei, and Ras Bissawur, he ordered them to go to our prison and inform us, that we were free, and could go to the camp. I could scarcely believe the import of the message, so utterly opposed did it appear to reason, common sense, and the usual tactics of Theodorus.

"We instantly got ready to obey the royal behest, the most gracious he ever issued; when another messenger arrived to inform us that it was probably too late that day to reach the British camp, and that we should postpone our departure till the next day. As we all harboured a vague dread, that our exit was a mere blind to give *éclat* to some base treachery, we did not regret another night's reprieve. After waiting an hour, more peremptory orders were conveyed to us that we should start. As we emerged out of our prison, we encountered many faces bathed in tears. It was touching to see that even at Magdala, there were hearts not indifferent to the foreigners, or unconcerned about our freedom and release. The kind and sympathetic groups, like ourselves, imagined that the march towards the royal camp, was a short funereal procession to execution and the grave. Near the gates of the fortress, we met Messrs. Meyer and Saalmüller, two of the European artisans, who were to escort us into the British camp. 'Is there any treachery?' we anxiously inquired of our appointed conductors. 'We are not aware that there is,' was the response. 'We know for certain,' they added, 'that a little while ago, the King intended to commit suicide, and had he succeeded in his design, you and every European in the camp, would, ere this, have fallen beneath the lances and swords of the enraged Chiefs.' That the restraint imposed on the tyrant's violence, should, humanly speaking, prove the safeguard of his Captives, seemed to me an interposition so miraculous and Divine, that I dismissed all apprehensions, and rapturously contemplated the approaching hour of freedom and liberty.

"The order was, that we should quit the camp without delay. We were quite willing to obey this behest, had not two of the Chiefs, who were friendly disposed towards us, unsolicited, sent a message to their master, that we were loth to leave without a parting interview. Certainly we had no desire to encounter once more the ash-coloured countenance and vengeance-flashing eye of Theodorus. The Chiefs knew that perfectly well, and to forestall that sad catastrophe, which they anticipated the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces would visit with a retributive vengeance, they took every precaution to avert it. Two or three messages passed rapidly



between the King and his white Captives, and at last the order came that his Majesty would receive Mr. Rassam, and no one else.

“Our friend, in full diplomatic uniform, and surrounded by a whole concourse of Chiefs and royal domestics, hurried on to Fahla; whilst the other seven Captives and Mrs. Rosenthal, who was a semi-prisoner, and always associated with us, which was not the case with the rest, were driven along a path that lay at the foot of serrated cliffs and shivered rocks, that were literally crowded with spectators. King Theodorus, we were told, was not two hundred yards from the spot where we stood. This startled us. Go on—stop—to the right, to the left, were the contradictory commands that hissed, in whispering notes, along the line formed by the Captives and their guards.

“Hemmed in by dizzy precipices and lofty rocks, the frowning countenance of the King in front, and the anxious and expectant gaze of numerous guards in the rear, we resolved not to risk the peril of an unguarded step, till we positively knew what course to pursue. Pale and trembling, we awaited the issue of the next few minutes. The clatter of shields and the glimmer of spears made me turn to the right, and to my amazement, I beheld Theodorus, threading his way between huge blocks towards the path where we were standing. Instantly we all fell prostrate on the ground and saluted him. He looked flushed, distracted, and wild. When close to me, and I was the fifth in the rear, his fiery gaze lighted for a moment on me, and then in a smooth soft tone he said: ‘How are you? Good bye.’ It was the sweetest Amharic to which I had ever listened—the most rapturous sentence that ever greeted my ears. It was said, that at the very moment when he dismissed Mr. Rassam, his hand grasped a gun, evidently with the design of discharging it at his white Captives. Had he done so, the group of musketeers by whom he was surrounded would have followed his example. Impelled by an invisible power, the weapon, with the rapidity of the lightning’s flash, dropped out of his grasp; and Divine mercy, not Theodorus’ clemency, saved us from a violent death.

“Slowly and solemnly we marched on our way. There was no haste or hurry, which might have aroused the tyrant’s wrath, and brought the executioner upon us, but the measured tramp of men, who reluctantly leave a spot where they would willingly linger. Once, however, beyond the hated camp, we accelerated our steps, and did not halt till we were within sight of our liberators’ closely-ranged conical tents. Evening had already set in, and dark shades shrouded every object from our view. On, on we rapidly strode. Suddenly we heard a challenge. They were Indian pickets. They salaamed us in tones of evident pleasure. We advanced. The hum of voices became more distinct. There was a shout, a cheer,

and a hurrah. A clear melodious voice resounded far above the hum and murmur of the wide-stretching lines, it was from its accents the voice of an officer, and the message it conveyed was affecting, solemn, and significant. *'God has heard His people's prayer, and disposed King Theodorus to let his prisoners go.'*

"It was, indeed, a wonderful deliverance. King Theodorus and his few faithful Chiefs had no intention to grant us freedom and liberty. They had resolved to immolate us on that very path, which they foresaw our liberators would traverse, ere many hours had elapsed. One word, and one only, would have stretched us lifeless on the hard and rocky ground. God, however, was with us, and He alone conducted us safely through the midst of the murderous band, who were quite prepared to imbrue their hands in the white men's blood. Twice his Chiefs, and particularly Ras Engeda, urged him, as we were quitting the camp, that he should wrench off our hands and feet, and thus demonstrate that he feared no enemy, and dreaded no danger. 'No; I have already killed people enough, let the white men go and be free.'

"Having yielded to an irresistible power, and given up his most valued hostages, he unhesitatingly complied with Sir Robert Napier's firm and unbending demand, and on the following day, Easter Sunday, surrendered his European workmen and their families. This last act of submission may, perhaps, have been prompted by a faint hope that the Commander-in-Chief would now withdraw his troops and leave Magdala in possession of a gang of desperadoes, to carry on their atrocious and murderous trade. He forgot the condition imposed on him; and had to learn that a British general is as true to his word, as he is faithful to his sword."

Let us now turn to the more detailed description, given by an observer of the action, which had led to this great and long hoped-for deliverance.

"Sir Robert Napier had arrived with his staff, and it was evident, by the anxious care with which he reconnoitred the hill before us, and the head of the valley, that he considered our position to be a critical one. We could see with our glasses half-a-dozen guns in line on the flat top of Fahla, and as many more upon Salasie, and presently we saw two artillerymen go from gun to gun, and load them in succession. Still all was quiet, but the suspense was a most anxious one, for we knew that from the fortress they could see our long line of animals winding up the valley, and that the head of the train must be fast approaching. Presently, the Naval Rocket Brigade, which was in front of the baggage, emerged upon the flat below us, and joined the Punjaubees, and almost at the same moment a dozen voices proclaimed, 'A large force is coming down the road on the brow of the fortress.' Every glass was turned there, and a large body of horse and foot men were seen hurrying

down pell-mell, and without any order or regularity. At first there was a divided opinion as to whether this was a peaceful embassy, or an attack; but all doubt was put an end to in another minute, by the booming of a gun from Fahla, and by a thirty-two pound shot striking the ground, at a few yards from the body of Punjaubees. It was war then, and a general burst of cheering broke from the officers who were clustered round the Generals. Theodorus actually meant to fight, and not only that, but to fight in the open. Still, our position was a most serious one. The second Brigade was miles behind, the baggage undefended except by the Punjaubees, and it was easy enough for the enemy to make a circuit down the ravine and to avoid them. Sir Robert Napier instantly despatched an aide-de-camp to Major Chamberlain, commanding the Pioneers, to order him to take up a position on elevated ground to his left, where he could the better protect the baggage, and to order the Naval Brigade to hurry up the valley, to the commanding spur upon which we were standing. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp was sent back to bring up the infantry. It was a most exciting five minutes. The enemy were coming down with very great rapidity. They had already come down the road from the fortress, and were scattered over the plain, the principal body moving towards the valley in which was our baggage, the rest advancing in scattered groups, while the guns upon Fahla kept up a steady fire upon the Punjaubees. A prettier sight is seldom presented in warfare than that of the advance of the enemy. Some were in groups, some in twos and threes. Here and there galloped Chiefs in their scarlet cloth robes. Many of the foot men, too, were in scarlet or silk. They kept at a run, and the whole advanced across the plain with incredible and alarming rapidity, for it was for some time doubtful whether they would not reach the brow of the little valley, along which the Rocket Train was still coming along in a single file, before the infantry could arrive to charge them, and in that case there can be no doubt that the sailors would have suffered severely. The road, or rather path from the valley, up to the spur upon which we stood, was steep and very difficult, and considerable delay occurred in getting the animals up. After a few minutes, which seemed ages, the infantry came up at the double; all their fatigue and thirst vanished, as if by magic, at the thought of a fight. The 4th, who were only about 300 strong—the remainder of their body of a hundred and fifty being with the baggage—were ordered to go on in skirmishing order; they were followed by the little party of Engineers, then came the Beloochees, and after them the two companies of the 10th N.I. and the Sappers and Miners. Just as the head of the infantry went down into the valley, the leading mules reached the top of the crest by our side, and in less than a minute the first rocket whizzed out on the plain. It was our first answer to the fire which the guns of the fortress had kept up, and was greeted with a general cheer. As rocket after rocket rushed out in rapid

succession, the natives paused for a minute, astonished at these novel missiles, and then, their Chiefs urging them forward, they again advanced. They were now not more than five hundred yards from ourselves, a hundred from the edge of the little ravine up the side of which the skirmishers of the 4th were rapidly climbing. With my glass I could distinguish every feature, and as we looked at them coming forward with a run, with their bright-coloured floating robes, their animated gestures, their shields and spears; one could not help feeling pity for them, ruffians and cut-throats as most of them undoubtedly were, to think what a terrible reception they were about to meet with. In another minute the line of skirmishers had breasted the slope, and opened a tremendous fire with their Sniders upon the enemy. The latter, taken completely by surprise, paused, discharged their firearms, and then retreated, slowly and doggedly, but increasing in speed as they felt how hopeless was the struggle against antagonists who could pour in ten shots to their one. Indeed, at this point, they were outnumbered even by the 4th alone, for they were in no regular order, but in groups and knots scattered over the whole plain. The 4th advanced rapidly, driving their antagonists before them, and followed by the native regiments. So fast was the advance, that numbers of the enemy could not regain the road to the fortress, but were driven away to the right, off the plateau, on to the side of a ravine, from which the rockets again drove them, still further to the right, and away from Magdala. The 4th and other regiments, formed up at a few hundred yards from the foot of the ascent to the fortress, and for half an hour maintained an animated fire against the riflemen who lined the path, and kept up a brisk return from small rifle pits and the shelter of stones and rocks. All this time, the guns upon Fahla, and some of those upon Salasie, kept up a constant fire upon our advancing line, but the aim was very bad, and most of the shot went over our heads. Certainly, more alarming were our own rockets, some of which came in very unpleasant proximity to us. Presently, to our great relief, they joined us, and soon drove the enemy's riflemen up the hill, after which they threw a few salvos of rockets with admirable aim at the guns a thousand feet above us, doing, as it afterwards turned out, considerable damage, and nearly killing Theodorus himself, who was superintending the working of the gun by his German prisoners. In the meantime, a much more serious contest was taking place upon our left. The main body of the enemy had taken this direction to attack the baggage, and advanced directly towards the Punjaub Pioneers, who were defending the head of the road. Fortunately, as they were nearly approaching, Colonel Penn's mountain train of steel guns, which were following the naval train, arrived at the top of the road, and instantly unloaded and took their places by the side of the Punjaubees. When the enemy were within three hundred yards, the steel guns opened with shells, and speedily stopped the advance of the



head of the column. The greater part of the natives then went down a ravine, further to the left, down which they proceeded to the attack of the baggage, in the main valley of which this ravine was a branch. The baggage guard, composed of a detachment of the 4th, scattered along the long line, had already been warned by the guns of the fortress that an attack was impending, and Captain Aberdie, of the Transport Train, galloping down, brought them word of the advancing body of the enemy. The various officers upon duty instantly collected their men. Captain Roberts was in command, and was well seconded by Lieutenants Irving, Sweeney, and Durrant of the 4th, and by the officers of the Transport Train. As the enemy poured down the ravine, they were received by a withering fire from the deadly Snider. A portion of the Punjaubees came down the ravine and took them in flank, and some of the guns of Penn's battery, getting upon a projecting space, scattered death everywhere amongst them. From the extreme rapidity of the fire of the Snider, the firing at this time in different parts of the field was as heavy and continuous as that of a general action between two large armies. The Punjaubees behaved with great gallantry, and charged with the bayonet, doing great execution. The natives, who had fought with great pluck, now attempted to escape up the opposite side of the ravine, but great numbers were shot down as they did so, their white dresses offering a plain mark to our riflemen; at last, however, the remnant gained the opposite bank, and fled across the country to our left, owing to their retreat to Magdala being cut off. The action, the first to the last gun, lasted an hour and a half. It was, as far as our part of the fray was concerned, a mere skirmish. We had not a single man killed, and only about thirteen wounded, most of them slightly. Captain Roberts, however, was hit in the elbow-joint with a ball, and will, it is feared, lose his arm. On the other hand, to the enemy this is a decisive and crushing defeat. Upwards of three thousand of Theodorus' bravest soldiers sallied out; scarcely as many hundreds returned. Three hundred and eighty bodies were counted the next morning, and many were believed to have been carried off in the night. Very many fell upon the slope of the hill, and away in the ravine to our right and left, where our burying parties could not find them. Certainly five hundred were killed, probably twice as many were wounded, and of these, numbers have only crawled away to die. It was a terrible slaughter, and could hardly be called a fight, between disciplined bodies of men splendidly armed, and scattered parties of savages scarcely armed at all. Much as the troops wish for an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, I have heard a general hope expressed, that we shall not have to storm the place; for there is but little credit to be gained over these savages, and the butchery would be very great. The natives are, however, undoubtedly brave, and behaved really very gallantly. Not a single shield, gun, or spear, has been picked up, except by the side of the dead. The



living, even the wounded, retreated : they did not fly. There was no *suave qui peut*, no throwing away of arms, as there would have been, under similar desperate circumstances, by European troops. As the troops returned to the rear, we passed many sad spectacles. In one hollow a dozen bodies lay in various positions. Some had died instantaneously, shot through the head ; others had fallen mortally wounded, and several of these had drawn their robes over their faces, and died like Stoics. Some were only severely wounded, and these had endeavoured to crawl into bushes, and there lay uttering low moans. Their gaudy silk bodices, the white robes with scarlet ends which had floated so gaily but two hours since, now lay dabbled with blood, and dank with the heavy rains which had been pitilessly coming down for the last hour. I have omitted to mention, that a tremendous thunderstorm had come on while the engagement was at its height, and the deep roar of the thunder had for a time completely drowned the heavy rattle of musketry, the crack of the steel guns, and the boom of the heavy guns upon Fahla. Once, when the storm was at its height, the sun had shone brightly out through a rift of the thunder-clouds, and a magnificent rainbow shone over the field upon which the combatants were still fiercely contending. Only twice was the voice of man heard loudly during the fight. The first was a great cheer from the natives upon the hill, and which we could only conjecture as occasioned by the return unharmed of some favourite Chief. The other was the cheer which the whole British force gave, as the enemy finally retired up into their strongholds. Thus terminated, soon after six o'clock, one of the most decided and bloody skirmishes which, perhaps, ever occurred. It will be, moreover, memorable, as being the first encounter, in which British troops ever used breach-loading rifles.

“As we had marched before daybreak, and went into action long before any of the baggage animals came up, no one had taken food for the whole of the long and fatiguing day. Very strong bodies of troops were thrown out as pickets, and the whole were got up and under arms at two in the morning, lest Theodorus should renew his attack before daybreak. There was now news, that there was water to be had in a ravine to our left, and the Bhurties were sent down with the water skins, and numbers of the soldiers also went down with their canteens. The water was worse than any I ever drank before, and ever think to drink again. Numbers of animals, mules or cattle, had been slaughtered there ; it appeared, in fact, to have been a camp of Theodorus' army. The stench was abominable, and the water was nearly as much tainted as the atmosphere. The liquid mud we had drank the day before, was, in comparison, a healthy and agreeable fluid. However, there was no help for it, and few, if any, refused the noxious drink. This climate must certainly be an extraordinarily healthy one, for in spite of hardship and privation, of wet, exposure, bad water, and want of stimulants, the health of the

troops has been exceptionally good. Only once, at Gazoo, have we had threatenings of dysentery, and this passed away as soon as we moved forward. I question, if we had a single man in hospital upon the day of the fight, which was certainly most providential, considering the extreme paucity of medical comforts, and the very few dhoolies available for the sick and wounded.

“On the next morning, several of the principal Chiefs came into camp, and said that they could not fight against our people, and would, therefore, surrender. They held, with their people, Fahla and Salasie, and would hand over these fortresses to us, on condition that themselves and their families were allowed to depart with their property, unharmed. With them came Samuel, a man who has been frequently mentioned in connection with the prisoners, both in their own letters and in Dr. Beke’s work. This man exercised a strongly prejudicial influence at the early period of their captivity, but has since shown them kindness. Having been one of Theodorus’ principal advisers, one could hardly have expected to see him deserting his master in his adversity. Samuel is a strongly-built man, with remarkably intelligent features, and rather grizzly iron-grey hair, which he wears in its natural state, and not plaited and grease-bedaubed, in the Abyssinian fashion. Sir Robert Napier accepted the surrender, and gave permission for the departure of their families and effects. Captain Speedy was ordered to return with them, with fifty of the 3rd Native Cavalry, under Colonel Locke. Orders had been previously given for the whole of the troops to parade on the flat in front of the fortress. Within half an hour after the departure of the Cavalry, the troops were formed up, and made an imposing show, the first we have had since we landed. Hitherto the Brigades have been separated, and so large a portion of them have been scattered along the line of baggage, that we have never had an opportunity of seeing our real force. We could now see that it was a very formidable body. The 33rd were drawn up 750 strong, the 4th 450, the 45th 400. We had now the whole of the 2nd Beloochees, their left wing having arrived during the night, and the whole of the Punjaubees. We had two companies of the 10th Native Infantry, and six companies of Sappers and Miners; altogether a very complete body of infantry. We had Murray’s Armstrong battery, two seven-inch mortars, Penn’s Mountain Train of steel guns, Twiss’s Mountain Train, and the Naval Rocket Brigade: a very respectable corps of artillery. In Cavalry alone we were wanting, having only the fifty troopers of the 3rd Native Cavalry, who had come as the Commander-in-Chief’s escort, and who had now just reached the top of the crest of Fahla. The rest of the Cavalry, namely, the 3rd Dragoons, 3rd and 4th Native Cavalry and Scind Horse, having been sent round into the valley to cut off Theodorus’ retreat. General Staveley was of course in command of this division. We moved forward, headed by the 33rd, to whom, as having—of the European regiments—borne the brunt

of the advance work throughout, was now assigned the honour of first entering, and of placing the British flag upon Magdala. They were followed by the 45th, Murray's and Twiss's battery, and the rest of the second Brigade, which had not had an opportunity of taking part in the action on Good Friday. Then came the 4th and 1st Brigades, with the exception of the troops who were left behind to take care of the camp. Major Baigrie, as quartermaster-general of the 1st Division, rode in advance. As the long line wound up the steep ascent in Fahla, the effect was very pretty, and elicited several remarks that this was our Easter Monday review. On the way up, we met a large number of men, women, and children, upon their way down. Once, upon the shoulder, which connects Fahla and Salasie, we found ourselves in the midst of a surprising scene. A perfect exodus was in progress. Many thousands of men, women, and children, were crowded everywhere, mixed up with oxen, sheep, and donkeys. The women, children, and donkeys, were laden with the scanty possessions of the inhabitants. Skins of grain and flour, gourds and jars for water and ghee, blankets for coverings and tents—these were their sole belongings. It was a Babel of noises. The women screamed their long quavering cry of admiration and welcome; men shouted to each other from rock to rock; mothers who had lost their children screamed for them, and the children wailed back in return; sheep and goats bleated, and donkeys and mules brayed. It was an astonishing scene. All appeared extremely glad to see us, and to be relieved from the state of fear and starvation in which they existed; men, women, and children bowed, until their foreheads touched the ground, in token of submission. The men who bore no arms, carried burdens, as did the women, but the warriors only carried their arms. The number of gaudy dresses among the latter was surprising, and their effect was very gay and picturesque. Shirts of red, blue, or purple brocade, with yellow flowers, and loose trousers of the same material, but of a different hue, were the prevailing fashion with the Chiefs. These were distinguished from the soldiers by having silver or tin ornaments upon their shields. At present, all retained their arms, but the 10th Native Infantry had been left at the foot of the hill, with orders to disarm them as they came down the road. All along our march over Salasie this extraordinary scene continued, and we saw more people, than we have seen during the whole time we have been in Abyssinia. The general opinion is, that there could not have been less than thirty thousand people congregated here, and I believe that this computation is rather under than over the mark. There was a universal feeling of thankfulness that we had not been obliged to bombard the place, as the slaughter in this defenceless crowd of people would have been terrible. Wherever was a level piece of ground, there their habitations were clustered. They were mere temporary abodes; a framework of sticks, covered with coarse grass, placed regularly and thickly, so as to turn the rain. They were

about the size and shape of ordinary haycocks, and show that the people must sleep, as they sit, curled almost into a ball.

“ From the shoulder, we climbed up the very winding road on the face of the natural scarps to Salasie. The natural strength of these positions is astounding. Fahla is tremendously strong, but it is as nothing to Salasie, which commands it. Colonel Milward, who commands the artillery, remarked to me, that in the hands of European troops, it would be not only impregnable, but perfectly unattackable. Gibraltar, from the land side, is considered impregnable, but Gibraltar is absolutely nothing to this group of fortresses. After capturing Fahla and Salasie—if such a thing would be possible—an attacking force would still have Magdala to deal with, and Magdala rises from the end of the flat shoulder which connects it with Salasie in an unbroken wall, except at the one point, where a precipitous road leads up to the gate. It must be a good 1,500 yards from the top of Salasie to Magdala, and even the heaviest artillery could do nothing against the wall of rock. We may well congratulate ourselves, that Theodorus sent his army to attack our baggage, for had they remained and defended the place, provided as they were with 40 cannon, our loss would have been tremendous, and even with our superior weapons, it is a question whether we could have succeeded. The road in many cases, winds along the face of a precipice, which a few men from above merely rolling down stones would have cleared. When we had reached the brow of Salasie—a still higher scarp of which rose two hundred feet above us—Major Baigrie halted for orders, and I rode on with two or three others to the little body of the 3rd Native Cavalry, who were half a mile further on, at the edge of the flat between Salasie and Magdala. I should say that early in the morning, we had received news that Theodorus had left in the night with a small body of his adherents, and intended to gain the camp of the Queen of the Gallas, and to throw himself upon her hospitality; the Gallas being wandering tribes, who, like the Arabs, would protect their bitterest enemy, if he reached their tents and claimed hospitality. When we were nearly at the top of the hill, we had received a message from the Cavalry, saying that there was a rumour that Theodorus had returned, and had committed suicide. This was the more probable, as he had often asserted that he would never be taken prisoner, and had only the day before fired a pistol at his own head, when the news came that Sir Robert Napier demanded the unconditional surrender of Magdala. The ball had only inflicted a slight scratch on his ear, but it was probable that he might have repeated the experiment with more success. When we reached the Cavalry, however, we found a state of some excitement prevailing. Some eight or ten horsemen, among whom Captain Speedy had recognized Theodorus himself, having just galloped up, brandishing spears and discharging their muskets in defiance. Colonel Locke could not, of course, charge without orders, and, indeed, it would



have been most imprudent to do so, as the whole of the shoulder, a quarter of a mile wide, and six or seven hundred yards to the fort of Magdala, were covered with little huts, behind, and in which, any number of men might have been concealed. Colonel Locke then threw out a few of his men as skirmishers. We had plenty of time to examine the guns. Some were of English, some of Indian manufacture. All were of brass, and varied in size from a fourteen-pounder downwards. There were two or three small mortars among them. This was evidently the arsenal, for here were tools and instruments of all descriptions—files, hammers, anvils, &c. There were bags of charcoal and a forge, and here were many hundreds of balls, varying in size from grape shot to immense stone balls for the giant mortar, which shattered to pieces the other day at the first attempt to fire it. At this time we made a discovery, which quite destroyed the feeling of pity which the gallantry of Theodorus, in exposing himself to our fire, had excited. The Beloochees had joined us, and were posted near the edge of a precipice to our right. Their attention being attracted by an overpowering stench, they looked over the edge of the rock, and there, 50 feet below, was one of the most horrifying sights which was ever beheld. There, in a great pile, lay the bodies of the 350 prisoners whom Theodorus had murdered last Thursday, and whom he had thrown over the edge of the precipice. There they lay—men, women, and little children—in a putrifying mass. It was a most ghastly sight, and recalled to our minds the horrible cruelty of the tyrant, and quite destroyed the effect which his bravery had produced. At last, at half-past three, the troops came down and took their places, and at a quarter to four the whole of the guns and rockets opened a tremendous fire to cover the advance, and the 33rd, preceded by a small band of Engineers and Sappers, under Major Pritchard, and followed by the 45th, advanced to the assault, the 4th and the rest of the 1st Brigade retaining their places as a reserve. When within three hundred yards of the rock, the 33rd formed line, and opened fire at the gateway and high hedge which bound the summit of the precipice—the most tremendous fire I ever heard. Even the thunder which was, as during the fight of Good Friday, roaring over head, was lost in the roar of the Snider rifles, and which was re-echoed by the rocks in their front. Under cover of this tremendous fire, the Engineers and the leading company advanced up the path. When they were half-way up, the troops ceased firing, and the storming party scrambled up at a run. All this time, answering flashes had come back from a high wall which extended for some feet at the side of the gateway, and from behind the houses and rocks near it. When the Engineers, headed by Major Pritchard, reached the gateway, several shots were fired through loopholes in the wall, and two or three men staggered back wounded, Major Pritchard himself receiving two very slight flesh wounds in the arm. The men immediately put their rifles



through the holes, and kept up a constant fire, so as to clear away their enemies from behind it. The 45th opened fire, to prevent the enemy's skirmishers doing damage, and a few pioneers of the 45th were sent up with axes to force open the gate. In the meantime, however, the men of the 33rd, upon the road leading up to the gate, discovered a spot half-way up by which they were able to scramble up to the left, and getting through the hedge, they quickly cleared away the defenders of the gate. A large portion of the regiment entered at this spot, the gate not being fairly opened for a quarter of an hour after the storming party arrived at it, for when it was broken down it was found that the gate house was filled with very large stones, and therefore, had powder been at hand, and the gate been blown in, a considerable time must have elapsed before the party could have entered. Behind the gateway were a cluster of huts, many of whose inhabitants still remained in them, in spite of the heavy fire which had for two hours been kept up. Behind them was a natural scarp twenty-five or thirty feet high, with a flight of steps wide enough only for a single man to ascend at a time. At the top of this was another gate, which had been shattered by the rifles of the 33rd. I entered with the rear of the regiment, but all was by that time over. By the first gateway were six or seven bodies, and two or three men by the second. Beyond this was the level plateau, thickly covered with the native huts of their ordinary construction, and the haycock fabrics which had covered the other hills and plateau. At a hundred yards from the gate lay the body of Theodorus himself, pierced with three balls, one of which, it is said, he fired with his own hand. He was of middle height and very thin, and the expression of his face in death was mild, rather than the reverse. He had thrown off the rich robe in which he had ridden over the plain, and was clad in an ordinary Chief's red and white cloth.

"I presently met an affecting procession. These were the prisoners. Laden with heavy foot chains were at least a hundred poor wretches, who had lingered for years in the tyrant's clutches. Many of them were unable to walk, and were carried along by their friends. They endeavoured in every way to express their joy and thankfulness. They bent to the ground, they cried, they clapped their hands, and the women—such at least as were not chained—danced and set up their shrill cry of welcome. Very kind were the soldiers to them, and not a few gave up their search for odd articles of plunder, in order to set to with hammer and chisel to remove their chains. There were some hundreds of huts upon the flat plateau, but not one of them bore any signs of the bombardment, and fortunately the great distance at which the guns were fired had saved the inhabitants from the injury which they must otherwise have suffered from the needless bombardment. A few people had been wounded when the 33rd had first entered, but their number was very small, and it seems incredible that out of so large a population

only some ten or fifteen, and these the defenders of the gate, were killed. The huts were all of the same size and description, stone walls with conical roofs, and no light except that which entered by the door. The King himself lived in a tent. His wife, or I should rather say wives, lived in a house precisely similar in shape, but larger than the other tents. One or two of these poor women were among the wounded, having rushed wildly about the place before the firing ceased, and having been struck by stray bullets. It is extremely satisfactory to know that no lives, with the exception of those of the actual fighting men, were sacrificed. We have no killed, and only ten or fifteen wounded, most of them very slightly. One of the Punjaubees, who was wounded in the fight three days before, has since died.

“The Abyssinian Expedition may now be said to be over, and has been a more perfect and extraordinary success than the most sanguine could have predicted. It would, in the face of the terrible forebodings which were launched when it was first set about, have seemed almost an impossibility that we could have journeyed here, defeated, and almost annihilated Theodorus’ army, rescued the whole of the prisoners, stormed Magdala—incomparably the strongest fortress in the world—Theodorus being slain by his own hand—and returned before the rainy season, with a loss of only one man dead from his wounds, and two or three from sickness—a loss infinitely less than would have taken place in the ordinary course of nature, among so large a body of men. And yet this apparent impossibility has been, by the *especial providence of God*, achieved; for that He has specially blessed our efforts it would be the height of scepticism to doubt. We have passed through fatigues and hardships which one would have thought must have told upon the strongest constitution. We have had wet, day after day, with bitterly cold winds, and no change even of underclothing, for a month; we have had no tobacco or stimulants to enable the system to resist this wet and cold, and yet the hospitals are empty, and the health of the troops perfect. We have defeated a large and hitherto invincible army, and taken the strongest fortress in the world, with the loss of only one man. We have accomplished a march through a country of fabulous difficulties, destitute of roads and almost destitute of food, and with our difficulties of transport vastly aggravated by the untrustworthy reports of those sent on before, and by the consequent breakdown of our baggage train, from disease, thirst, and overwork; and yet we shall leave the country before the rains set in. Humanly, too much credit can scarcely be given to Sir Robert Napier. He has had to overcome innumerable difficulties, which I have from time to time alluded to, but he has met them all admirably. As is often the case with successful commanders, he is immensely popular. The extreme kindness and thoughtfulness of his manner to all, make him thoroughly beloved, and I believe that the men would do anything for him.”

Another observer wrote :—

“The descent from Dalanta is nearly 4,000 feet, and was the heaviest bit of ground the army had yet gone over. The river was reached and forded, and then began the ascent which leads up to Magdala. This was a work of great labour. Theodorus’ military road, which he made to move his great mortar, begins on the right bank of the Tiddo, and is continued down to the Bashilo and up to the fort. To avoid a surprise on the road, the troops had to climb the heights on each side. In this way the force got up unmolested to the ground under Magdala. The attack of Theodorus’ soldiers was made on the baggage and the steel guns, which they mistook for baggage. Theodorus himself was in that part of the mountain called Fahla, where most of his guns were placed; and it was from near his position that the rush was made. I am told it was wonderful to see the speed with which the Abyssinian warriors jumped and ran down such a steep and difficult descent. As they came down in such masses, the baggage and naval rocket train were for a moment threatened with danger. The 4th King’s Own, under Colonel Cameron, were ordered to meet them, and two companies moved up to the small plain of Arogee, which now gives its name to the action. They opened out into skirmishing order, and their first discharge was delivered so near to the Abyssinians—about thirty paces—that a score of them bit the dust. More of the 4th came up, and were supported by the Beloochees, who moved up to the left of them, and by the Pioneers, who passed and supported the right. The Naval Brigade got upon a high ground behind, and kept up a fire of rockets during the engagement. In this action, the Abyssinians showed no lack of courage; they came on bravely, some on horseback, some with spears and shields, and many with muskets; but the terrific and ceaseless shower of lead which the 4th poured in with their Snider rifles was irresistible, and the enemy had to give way, leaving about 400 dead on the field. It is clear that their plans were formed in the expectation of victory, for they sent down a body on each flank, and penetrated in some cases to the rear, so as to cut off all chance of retreat; and had they succeeded, the whole British force engaged would, in all probability, have been destroyed. Theodorus had alluded in his conversation to David overthrowing Goliath, and had said that the like might take place again. In his scriptural mode of talking, he is reported to have said, that he looked for the British army coming, as Simeon looked for the Messiah.”

It is impossible for any but those who have passed through so many years of hope and fear,—of suffering and occasional relief,—and of all the varied trials which this history has depicted; to realize the feelings of the men of God, who were now free and happy. It was on the heights of Balacklava that the devoted Mis-

sionary had, several years before, proclaimed the Gospel message to an assemblage of British soldiers; and now again his voice is raised, addressing this noble band, by whom, in the gracious providence of God, he had been saved "out of the mouth of the lion."

"I was during the whole of that day in a state of delicious ecstasy and dreamy raptures. Unrestrained freedom appeared to me unnatural. I felt as if I could not divest myself of the idea that I was no longer guarded, that I needed not to conceal every scrap of paper, or burn the letters with which dear friends and kindred in anticipation, greeted my safe arrival in the British camp. It was, indeed, a Resurrection festival—a foretaste of that glorious resurrection, when the grave will be deprived of its precious treasures, death of its ghastly trophies, and this tenement of decay and mortality become the abode of life and everlasting beauty.

"In the afternoon, at the request of the senior Chaplain, the Rev. E. S. Goodhart, I preached twice in the camp, on the solemn subject suggested by the stupendous events of that grand festival of the Church. The roll of the drum, the clash of arms, the long line of troops, and, above all, the vague consciousness that I was free, and stood among friends who had encountered innumerable hardships, toils, and privations, to rescue me and my companions out of the fangs of a remorseless tyrant, made my heart gush forth with emotions of the deepest gratitude towards God and man.

"Early next morning all the troops marched up to Magdala. King Theodorus, to forestall his capture, tried to decamp. His people feigned, as if they intended to follow him. There was the usual bustle and clamour of voices, the saddling of mules, and striking of tents; but after waiting for an hour—an hour in which was crowded and compressed a terrible future—he perceived that he was disobeyed, abandoned, and forsaken by the men in whom his last hopes and expectations were centred. In a trice his charger's head was turned towards the mutinous host. His effort to stimulate their courage, and to animate their devotion was in vain. His voice had lost its charm, and his words fell on deaf ears. Indignant, furious, and almost mad, he clutched his pistol, and stretched the two who were nearest to him dead on the spot where they stood. This outburst of rage did not frighten into submission the rebellious bands, and the dreaded leader of victorious legions, with his few devoted and faithful Chiefs, was forced to seek a refuge and shelter from a foe he had so proudly defied, behind the ramparts of a rocky fortress. Desperation imparted vigour to his arm, and valour to his heart. His career of blood was, however, about to close. He had enthralled myriads and myriads of helpless beings; he had rioted again and again in the throes and agonies of the weak and defenceless; he had literally shed streams of human blood, and now,





INTERIOR OF MAGDALA. SALASIE IN THE DISTANCE.





when every prospect looked dark and dismal, that very pistol which had been so familiar with death, became the instrument with which he sealed his own doom.

“On the following morning, I rode with Mr. Goodhart and Captain Nicholson up to Magdala. Our path wound along the precipice, where lay in putrefying heaps, the slaughtered corpses of the great King’s prisoners. The sight made me shudder, and almost loudly I ejaculated: ‘Here my mortal career would have terminated, had not an invisible Power interposed in behalf of a helpless Captive and the sharers of his misery.’ On the Amba itself, all was activity and animation. There was now no longer heard the clank of galling chains, or witnessed the sad glance of despair. Every one looked happy and contented. There were still some prisoners with portions of their fetters dangling on their legs. They had, however, no shadow on their brow; on the contrary, their hearts were overflowing with an excess of gratitude that stifled their voices, and only in broken accents they could breathe forth their true, genuine, and hearty blessings on their deliverer—Sir Robert Napier. It was quite an exciting scene. The whole fortress swarmed with crowds of the curious and busy. Some collected Theodorus’ treasures, others despatched them down to the camp; and not a few, like myself, idly sauntered about, to have a full view of a spot, that will for generations to come live in the history of British enterprise, energy and valour. The King had not yet been buried. He was laid on a stretcher, in a hut, which for many months formed the dungeon of one of his white Captives. To behold that man, whose nod or word had often caused myriads and myriads to tremble, now rigid, gory, and dumb, awoke in me many solemn reflections. I now no longer remembered the tyrant who had transformed fertile provinces into tangled wildernesses, and happy homes into charred ruins. I no longer remembered the sufferings he had inflicted on me for four years and a half. I no longer remembered the throes and agonies of a nation, in which he found his delight to revel. No; my views wandered beyond the limits of time, and the visions that rose before my mind, made me rush out of the familiar hut.

“The Expedition, undertaken in the cause of humanity, and followed by the prayers of thousands, had achieved a most noble, glorious, and bloodless triumph. Magdala, however, still stood out in bold relief from the surrounding scenery, a proud monument of Theodorus’ conquest and power. Unexpectedly, on the 17th April, a mass of dense smoke rose in circling columns from the centre of the fortress. In a few minutes it became more bright and luminous. The last stronghold of Theodorus was on fire. It was a glorious sight—a sight which thrilled with joy the heart of the Amhara and Galla, the liberated captive and the victorious soldier.

“On the following Sunday, there was a thanksgiving service. The preacher selected for his text the words of the Apostle,

‘Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory.’ All felt the truth of this significant sentence—all were struck with its solemn import. It was indeed a victory—a victory achieved by prayer, and redounding to the glory of Him who has said, ‘Thou shalt call, and I will answer.’”

This chapter may fitly be concluded with the proclamation of Sir Robert Napier, who combined the highest qualities of the soldier, with the spirit and simplicity of the Christian.

“You have traversed, often under a tropical sun, or amidst storms of rain and sleet, 400 miles of mountainous and difficult country. You have crossed many steep and precipitous ranges of mountains more than 10,000 feet in altitude, where your supplies could not keep pace with you. When you arrived within reach of your enemy, though with scanty food, and some of you without either food or water, in four days you passed the formidable chasm of the Bashilo, and defeated the army of Theodorus, which poured down upon you from their lofty fortress in the full confidence of victory. A host of many thousands have laid down their arms at your feet. You have captured and destroyed upwards of thirty pieces of artillery, many of great weight and efficiency, with ample stores of ammunition. You have stormed the almost inaccessible fortress of Magdala, defended by Theodorus with the desperate remnant of his Chiefs and followers. After you forced the entrance, Theodorus, who never showed mercy, distrusted the offer of mercy held out to him, and died by his own hand. You have released not only the British Captives, but those of other friendly nations. You have unloosed the chains of more than ninety of the principal Chiefs of Abyssinia. Magdala, on which so many victims have been slaughtered, has been committed to the flames, and remains only a scorched rock. Our complete and rapid success is due—*first, to the mercy of God, whose hand, I feel assured, has been over us in a just cause; secondly, to the high spirit with which you have been inspired. Indian soldiers have forgotten the prejudices of race and creed, to keep pace with their European comrades. Never has an army entered into a war with more honourable feelings than yours; this has carried you through many fatigues and difficulties; you have been only eager for the moment when you could close with your enemy.*” One passage in the gallant Commander’s address, will be read with great satisfaction at home. “I thank you,” he says, “for your devotion to your duty, and the good discipline you have maintained. Not a single complaint has been made against a soldier, of fields injured, or villagers wilfully molested in property, or person.”

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### THE RETROSPECT. THE WELCOME.

We are standing upon the border-line, which divides one of the darkest and most anxious episodes of Missionary life, from the period of rest and relief upon which our Missionary Brother was about to enter. The events which had happened during those weary years,—the fruitless efforts which had been made in order to attain the ardently desired object,—the conflict of opinion on all points bearing upon the deliverance of the Captives,—and the persistent and maddened determination of Theodorus to tyrannize and to oppress, excite our wondering and perplexing thoughtfulness. When Dr. Beke departed from England, with the gifts and offerings, by which it was fondly hoped that he would secure the favour of the Monarch, and become the happy escort of the emancipated bondmen to the land of their adoption; how confident were many friends and relatives that this result would be attained! It was well, on his own account, that he was hindered from prosecuting his errand. Yet the disappointment was not the less acute, when, after months of trying activity, he was constrained to retrace his steps, and return from Massowah. And when the British Envoy, armed with full powers, and furnished with abundant means for the accomplishment of his Mission, reached the barbaric Court, how was it possible to doubt that he would return in safety, and be accompanied by the Captives! Further, when England's Queen condescended to accede to the barbarian's request, and sent through Mr. Flad, the special Envoy of the King, a missive of good-will, and an urgent appeal that there should be no further delay of the

long-expected release of the prisoners, it seemed impossible to doubt that this would at once be granted. But all these efforts failed, and amidst the almost inaccessible fastnesses of his native mountains, Theodorus presumed to bid defiance, to the greatest Power of the civilized world.

We have seen how these chains were broken by a military Expedition, which will ever be remembered, as one of the most remarkable and successful on record. Nor can we believe, that a feat of bold and judicious valour, which left its impress upon the tribes and nations of the East, and upon the various nationalities of Europe, was dearly purchased, even at the cost of nine millions sterling. There are occasions, when a country like Great Britain, with her numerous dependencies, engaged in the numberless occupations of commerce and peace, has need to seize the sword, and by some deed of fearless and indomitable courage, show to the world, that she is equal to the exigencies of war, as well as successful in the pursuits of peace.

But it is to a higher Tribunal that we must appeal, when we contemplate the happy, though tardy results of those years of unavailing negotiation, and military success. The world has never witnessed events which afforded more unequivocal testimony to the power of Intercessory PRAYER. Of this, the whole history has borne the impress, and supplied the evidence. The young and the old—the rich and the poor—the noble and the peasant, with incessant importunity, pleaded with the living God, that life and freedom might be given to the sufferers. The uniform of the British army, covered the hearts of men of every grade, who knew that “salvation was of the Lord,” and who marched onward in reliance upon His blessing, as well as in the confidence of success. And the great Commander, who so wisely and vigorously conducted the campaign, was the first to acknowledge, that the hand of God might have been traced in every step which had been taken, and that the remarkable results which had followed their efforts, was a direct answer to prayer. When Mr. Stern was about to publish in the pages of “The Captive Missionary,” the account of the afflictive experiences of himself and his fellow-Captives, and requested permission to



dedicate the Work to Lord Napier of Magdala (to which title Sir Robert Napier had been elevated), he received the following reply :

“Thelydon Hall,

“Welshpool,

“October 13th, 1869.

“Dear Mr. Stern,

“I must beg your pardon for so much delay in replying to your letter of the 30th, but my movements in the country have been unfavourable to the regularity of receiving and answering correspondence.

“It will afford me great pleasure to accept the dedication of your book, as I am sure, from all I have heard of you, it will be in accordance with your character and mission.

“I was but one, amongst many, who were instrumental in your rescue.

“I trust that you and your family are recovering from your long and sad sufferings.

“I was sorry that the circumstances in which we left Magdala, prevented me from doing more for your comfort than I was able to do, during your march to the coast.

“I remain, dear Mr. Stern,

“Yours truly,

“NAPIER OF MAGDALA.”

The exultation which animated the hearts of everyone, when the tidings reached England of the result of the Expedition, can hardly be expressed. There was not a defect to mar the perfect accomplishment of the undertaking. Everyone of the Captives had been delivered,—Magdala had been destroyed,—not a British soldier had fallen in battle. Theodorus had perished by his own hand,—and a salutary check given to the barbarous presumption of the Abyssinian Chiefs. “Consider,” said Lord Shaftesbury (in his speech at Exeter Hall, in 1868), “the manner in which that Expedition has been conducted, and you will find nothing like it in the records of history. For no other purpose than to rescue Captives, cruelly and unjustly detained, this country resolved upon an arduous, expensive and unknown Expedition. They undertake to traverse wilds, scarcely

ever trodden by the foot of man; they undertake to dive into recesses, to scale mountains, and penetrate valleys, where no civilized being had ever been before. They go forward. They oppose none. They insult none. They pay for everything they consume. By the blessing of God, they arrive at the spot. The Captive is reached. The tyrant is slain. And the army, within a few moments of having accomplished its purpose, is on its march back again to the coast, without having appropriated to itself one acre of land, or having received remuneration to the value of a feed of corn. I maintain, that if ever there was in the history of mankind a Christian Expedition, this is worthy to be ranked with them in that history. And if this is the last Expedition that Great Britain shall undertake, it will be one of the most glorious, one of the most satisfactory, in the whole range of her magnificent annals. Let us lose no opportunity of blessing Almighty God, for the Expedition will bring other results. It was a military Expedition in appearance. It will prove a Christian Expedition in reality. It was fitted to infuse into the minds of the natives the truth, the valour, the character of a Christian people; the feelings of a Christian nation; and the value of that Gospel which it has professed. And we shall have to rejoice that there was combined in one man—great Christian man as he is—the great Commander and the true Christian.”

And now, it may be said, that all England was in expectation. The telegrams which announced the arrival of the army, and its precious convoy of the emancipated Captives, at Massowah—their embarkation for England, and their progress from port to port towards England’s shores—all was read and watched with thrilling interest. It is not too much to say that there was one central figure in the group, upon whom there was a concentration of attention. It was the figure of Henry Aaron Stern—the hero of many a peaceful conflict—of many a Missionary enterprise; and whose body now bore the marks of many a scar—the records of suffering in the great Master’s service. And when he and his fellow-labourers were gathered once more to their homes and hearths, where they again embraced those whom they loved, and received the welcome of rejoicing friends, the emotions of their hearts were too deep for

utterance. Like the bow which had been strung through many a weary year, when the tension was relaxed, the heart-strings, for a time, refused to regain their natural tone; and the deep sorrows of the past were but slowly subdued, by the relief and joys of the present. It might be said that here, as in the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, conflicting feelings strove for the mastery; "so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy, from the noise of the weeping of the people."

Thus passed a season of private and personal calm. This was followed by the gathering together of the people of God, to offer a public acknowledgment of the deliverance, which had been wrought by the hand and power of God. A Meeting for this purpose was summoned, at Freemasons' Hall, which was well filled. The President of the London Society, the Earl of Shaftesbury, presided; and the platform was occupied by Mr. Stern, Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal, Mr. and Mrs. Flad, and a large number of influential friends. The Meeting was one of "Thanksgiving;" and the reading of portions of Scripture, and prayers, mingled with praise, formed the most suitable of its characteristics. Mr. Stern's short address was as follows:—

"About two months and a half ago, he and his fellow-captives were anxiously awaiting the issue of the conflict in the issue of which their lives were involved. That the conflict would be so short, and the result so completely successful no one could have conjectured, much less anticipated. Shut up on a lofty rock, and in the hands of a cruel and merciless tyrant, whose only delight it was to riot in the sufferings and agonies of humanity, it could scarcely have been expected that he would have allowed his hostages to go—that he would have allowed his captives to obtain their freedom without attaining his own object. The Captives in all their trials and troubles were sustained and buoyed up with a firm confidence that God would not forsake them; and when at last the army approached, they again felt cheered by the thought that the struggle, whatever its termination might be, would be short, and their trials would soon come to an end. And yet, notwithstanding that hope, they were in the power of a man, whose actions only the day before the troops arrived, visibly testified what were his intentions in his declaration, that if the Commander-in-Chief shed the blood of any of the natives, the blood of the white men should be intermingled with that of his own people. But that man at the first summons actually gave up his hostages, whose detention he expected would have been instrumental to his retaining his country, and perhaps a great many adja-

cent provinces. Whatever rule might be applied to his conduct—whatever test might be used—whether it was to be regarded by the rules of logic, or the cold reasoning of philosophy, there was only one true solution; and that was that God had heard the prayer of His people, and sent deliverance to His servants. It was not his intention to dilate on the various incidents which took place, but he could assure every one present, that there were many occasions when he and his fellow Captives longed for and sighed for death, which they would have regarded as one of the greatest blessings which could befall them. He went to Abyssinia, not with the object of making money or amassing riches. He went there as a Missionary, prompted by a sincere desire to make known the Gospel of his Saviour, and the truth of God's Holy Word. That Gospel did find entrance and admission into the hearts of many. The Spirit of God evidently touched the hearts of the people in many a village, and a responsive chord was manifested by many small congregations, and he witnessed many indications that the truth would radiate far and wide in many distant parts of that country. He had travelled over many a province, where the voice of the message of glad tidings had never before fallen on the ears of the people. It was true that martyrs had suffered more than the Abyssinian Captives, but the martyrs were sustained to some extent by the consciousness that they were proclaiming the Truth, and dying for it as a testimony to the religion which they professed. The tyrant never accused the Missionaries of having done wrong in proclaiming the Gospel. He continually brought charges against them which were mere inventions, for the purpose of palliating his cruel acts, and the Captives were sick at heart in thinking that they were charged with political crimes. However dangerous and trying the position of the Captives had been—notwithstanding that the sword was suspended over their heads, and threatened to descend in a way which made them shudder—God restrained the wrath of that man, and whilst he has gone to the bar of the Everlasting, his Captives now unite in praising God for the deliverance which He had vouchsafed them. Over and over again, the King had made up his mind to put an end to the lives of his Captives, but the Divine power restrained him, almost palsied his fingers, and at last, almost miraculously, He restored the prisoners to freedom. It was impossible to give any other solution to the liberation of the Captives than that it was a Divine interposition. With respect to the army, they had encountered dangers and hardships of which it was almost impossible to form a conception; but all their efforts, and energies, and skill, and tactics, would have been in vain, if God had not interposed for the rescue of the Captives. That was not merely his own assertion. That declaration was made by the Commander-in-Chief when he first had the opportunity of addressing the troops under his control, and that was the opinion of every right-minded and right-thinking officer and soldier in the force. God had heard the prayers of those who had so perse-

veringly, faithfully, supplicated God for the deliverance of those who were in bondage and captivity. He had experienced many signal deliverances in various parts of the world, but he could solemnly declare, that nothing had ever made such a deep impression on his heart as that caused, not by the deliverance of the Captives, but by the manner in which it had been effected, in answer to the prayers which had been offered on their behalf. He had now only to tender his own thanks and the thanks of his fellow-captives to those who had manifested so much perseverance at the throne of grace on their behalf. He hoped they would do the same in every difficulty and danger, resting assured that whether they prayed for themselves or for others, a blessing would descend upon them, and enable them to say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul—forget not all his benefits.'"

One of the Abyssinian soldiers wrote, after his return to his own village—"Tell Mr. Stern, that the Gospel which he preached in prison is spreading far and wide, and numbers are continually being added to those that believe in Christ, and numbers have rejected those superstitions which disgrace our Church."

Mr. Rassam, the British Envoy, in a letter of September 26th, 1868, addressed to Mr. Stern, related the following:—

"I had a letter from an old friend yesterday (a sister of the late Mr. Bowen), a most pious Christian; who told me that she had dreamt on the night of the 14th April last, that the King was dead and the Captives released. The dream was so extraordinary, and comes from such a good Christian lady, that I must insert it here *verbatim*. She says, 'It is curious that I felt convinced you were all safe a fortnight before it was known in England; for I dreamt the night of the 14th April, that I was on a steep hill, with large grey rocks, euphorbias, palm trees, and a mud wall on the top. Just then I met you, and you said to me 'Theodorus is dead, and all the Captives are in the British Camp.'"

"Is not this very curious? As you know, on that day I had charge of the body of Theodorus, and in the evening, or at least in the afternoon, I had him buried."



## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

A sacred stillness followed the turmoil and agony of the past. So sacred was the rest and calm which now filled the enraptured and thankful heart of the emancipated Missionary, that over it we would fain draw the veil of sympathy and respect.

Those years of suffering had ploughed their deep furrows into his health and constitution. The powerful frame, and the abstemious habits, had alone, under the Divine blessing, enabled Mr. Stern to survive the hardships and cruelties to which he had been exposed. But crippled as he had been for years by fetters and chains, a derangement had taken place in the muscular and nervous system, which could never be removed, and the effects of which were to accompany him to the grave. The mind, so vigorous and buoyant, struggled with, and exerted a power superior to his physical infirmities. But there were many occasions in his future years, when those infirmities betrayed their presence, and obliged him for a time to suspend his labours. He had never spared himself, nor failed, wherever he might be, to throw himself energetically into the performance of every duty. So eager was the desire to see and hear him—a desire which spread throughout the whole land, and among all classes—and one which was not confined to the religious and the thoughtful—that he was constrained, with the least possible delay, to sacrifice his much needed repose, and to recount to others all that he had seen, and known and endured. An offer was made to him of six hundred pounds, on condition, that for that sum, he would give but twelve Lectures. But his soul revolted then, as it had

always done, from anything mercenary; and he unhesitatingly refused the tempting suggestion, as unworthy of his vocation as a Christian Missionary. When subsequently, at the earnest entreaty of some sympathizing friends, and with the consent of the Committee of the London Society, he gave a certain number of Lectures, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to his own service, he did not refuse this expression of practical regard. But all whose interest in him took this form, were well aware, that he never encouraged such evidences of their good-will.

As soon as it became known, that he was able and willing, to make his experience and captivity in Abyssinia, the occasion of advancing the interests of the London Society, applications for his presence and advocacy, poured in at the Society's House. Almost all the large towns of England were visited, and Meetings held. To say, that the attendance at these Meetings was unprecedented, and that the largest halls were crowded by those who hung with breathless interest on the eloquent narration of his great sufferings, his preservation and deliverance, is to say but little. An extraordinary impetus was given to the efforts which were usually made on behalf of the Society, and its funds were in consequence proportionally replenished.

At this juncture, persons of every rank of life seemed to covet an opportunity of inter-communication with the distinguished Missionary, and very prodigal were many, in offers of help, should the need and the occasion occur. These offers and proposals, harmonized with the thoughts which passed through Mr. Stern's mind on his arrival in England. He felt, that, physically, he would be unable to return to the Foreign Mission field; and that whatever work the Master of the vineyard might still have in store for him, should be in England, where he might be within easy reach of able medical advice. He therefore welcomed the prospect which these friendly offers suggested, of a settlement in some suitable field of labour, in a suburban or country parish, in which the duty would be regular and unexciting. But although these overtures came from persons, some of them of much influence, and others possessing a considerable amount of Church patronage—although many of these persons received him into their houses, with apparent

warmth and interest, and some even expressed their intention of approaching the Throne, in the hope of Royal patronage ; nevertheless, not a hand was practically lifted up, to give effect to the desires which had been thus encouraged. Letters exist, indicating, how persons who volunteered "to do anything in their power," professed to be powerless, when it suited their convenience. At length, the very thought of the charge of an English parish was abandoned, nor was the expectation or desire ever again encouraged, through the intervention of professing friends.

We are now persuaded that this was the hand and will of God. The symmetrical proportions of that great Missionary life were not, in His Providence, to be marred. Other ministerial vocations may be more dignified, in the eyes of man ; but this undoubtedly stands in the foremost place in the eyes of God. As a Missionary to the people of Israel he had lived, and as a Missionary to his own nation he died. There is no part of the outline which is defective ; and the colouring and proportions by which it was beautified and ennobled, are as true and harmonious, as may be found in the life of any of the sons of men. We therefore rejoice, that, in the extinction of hopes, which were at one time encouraged by those, who it was believed might have given them reality ; the hand and purposes of God left in their unbroken continuity, the character and incidents of his Missionary career.

But there were circumstances which cast a deeper shadow over his life and experience. If he received no marked favours, he could hardly have been expected to be the recipient of wrongs. One so noble and disinterested—one who had been so faithful a witness for the Truth, in the midst of so many dangers and tribulations—should have been exempt from the jealousy of the weak, and from the arrogance of official incompetence. This is alluded to, not for the purpose of enlarging upon a distasteful theme. But at times, there was a measure of chagrin, and an apparent absence of sympathetic action, which excited observation. This was altogether at variance with his natural instincts, and had its root in the conduct and demeanour of others.

Many interesting incidents are given by various friends, concerning the cordial welcome which Mr. Stern received whilst on his deputation

tours, and the impression which was produced by the thrilling narration, of all that had transpired during his captivity. In some respects, they were wanting in the characteristics of absolute novelty ; for a full confirmation of all which he related, had been publicly chronicled in the journals of the day. But his name and sufferings had been so long familiarized to almost every reader of passing events, that there were few who did not eagerly desire to see him, and to listen to the burning, though simple words, which fell from his lips.

The time for his wanderings was, however, drawing to a close. No settled sphere of labour suited to his desires had presented itself. At this juncture, Dr. Ewald, who had so long, ably and faithfully filled the post of Senior Missionary of the London Society, in the Metropolis, was led to retire through increasing age and infirmity. The office was offered to Mr. Stern. After careful and prayerful consideration, he accepted it. It was most providential, that one so capable and experienced was on the spot, to fill this vacancy, and to carry out the important work which, from the time of its foundation, had occupied a large measure of the attention of the Society. Mr. Stern entered upon his new duties on the 1st January, 1871.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### LONDON AND THE HOME MISSION.

Missions to the Jews have one advantage over other Foreign Missions. A very important part of the work is carried on within the limits of the United Kingdom, and appeals to the investigation and conviction of every sincere enquirer. No adequate plea of ignorance can be adduced,—no reasonable excuse for indifference to the claims of the work itself, or of unbelief concerning its results and consequences. It was in London that the Society first commenced its labours, and London continues to be the centre of its operations. Palestine Place, in which the principal Institutions are located, is easily accessible to every visitor to the Metropolis. There, the Episcopal Jews' Chapel,—the Schools for Hebrew Boys and Girls,—the Training Institution for Missionaries, and the kindred Establishment of the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution, and the Wanderers' Home, present a phalanx of evidence concerning what "God hath wrought." Here, there is sufficient to encourage every honest mind, and to silence objectors.

It was upon this field of work that Mr. Stern now entered. It presented to him no novelties. He had been more or less familiarized with it, from that memorable day, when first within the walls of the Chapel of the Society, the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel appealed powerfully to his conscience. It was in that sacred Edifice that his new office would require him to raise his voice in the vindication of those great truths, which, in his early years, he would have sought to destroy. He had himself been a partaker of the benefits of the Institutions which surrounded him, and he would therefore



sympathize with all those, to whom they might be made the channel of like blessings.

Dr. Ewald, the immediate predecessor of Mr. Stern, had long been distinguished, as one of the most true-hearted and successful of Missionaries to the Jews. He had been the instrument of leading many of his brethren according to the flesh, to the knowledge of the Saviour, in North Africa, Jerusalem, and London; in which spheres his Missionary life had been spent. It was a source of thankfulness to him, that the mantle of his work should be placed upon the shoulders of one so distinguished and able as Mr. Stern. It was in itself a pledge, that nothing would be wanting, to ensure its vigorous and thorough prosecution.

Soon after his appointment, Mr. Stern took up his residence at Palestine Place, in the house appointed for the use of the Head of the Home Mission. He was heartily welcomed by his fellow-labourers, over whom he was called upon to preside; and until the time of his death, those relations of brotherly sympathy and co-operation, were steadily maintained. His chief duties, consisted of the Sunday afternoon Hebrew service, which he conducted in the Episcopal Jews' Chapel;—the reception of Jewish Enquirers at his own house;—the visitation of Jews in those parts of the Metropolis in which they were wont to congregate, and the maintenance of correspondence with others, who, either living at a distance, or being peculiarly circumstanced, were unable to have personal communication with the Missionary. He continued to render valuable assistance in preaching and speaking on behalf of the Society, and he also gave lectures to the Missionary students on Jewish controversy. To this might be added the charge of the "Wanderers' Home," which had been established by Dr. Ewald, and the preaching of Special Sermons to the Jews, both in the Metropolis and in the Provinces. The two last features of Dr. Stern's duties, will require distinct and particular treatment. But the circumstances associated with his general Missionary labours, will be best illustrated, from the Reports which were formulated from year to year. The general sketch which he gave of the state of the Jews in England, is suggestive and important.

“Judaism in England presented a painful phase, about forty years ago. It was then an inert and immobile system. People clung to it from sheer habit. They did not question its veracity, nor trouble themselves to ascertain its origin and development. That certain rites or customs were enjoined by the rabbis, was quite enough to invest them all with the sanctity of a divinely-appointed ordinance. The labours of the Missionary, the circulation of the New Testament and Christian books, together with the progress of education, brought on a reaction. The more advanced and enlightened threw off the trammels of the Talmud, and formed themselves into a community known by the name of ‘British Jews.’ This led to much hostility, contention, and strife. The Orthodox, who profess to adhere to the traditional law, excommunicated the Reformed; and the Reformed denounced with unsparing vigour the intolerant fanaticism of the Orthodox. A schism threatened to mar the spurious unity of the Synagogue. This, no doubt, would have been the case, had not the progress of education, the influence of genuine religious conviction, and the ever-growing consciousness that unity is strength, tended to soften the bitter animosity which at the beginning of the movement burst forth with such virulence. The reiterated assertions of Jewish writers, that the discrepancies between the Orthodox and Reformed Synagogues are far less than those that exist in the bosom of a single Christian denomination, are certainly more ingenious than true. The Talmud, which claims equal, if not superior authority to the Word of God, the Reformed Jews utterly repudiate.

“But the Reform movement, although initiated amidst the plaudits of the wealthy and better educated, effected no real spiritual change. This could easily have been foreseen. It lacked every element essential to a beneficial religious reform. Had it received its impulse from a conscious yearning for pardon and peace, it might have inaugurated a new era of moral and spiritual life throughout the whole community; but as this was not the case, it could not exert any sensible influence, nor win many adherents. The Reformed, or British Jews, constitute but a small community. Most of them, if not all, are rich and cultivated. Religion with them is more a matter of the intellect than of the heart. It is true they accept the Old Testament as a rule of faith, though at the same time they give it a broad and elastic interpretation. With the Talmud they will have nothing to do, nor do they conform to rites and ceremonies, which all Jews have hitherto considered essential to salvation. Their ritual and worship, dogma and belief, are modified in accordance with the spirit of the age, and the Rationalistic theories of philosophic speculators.

“Next to the Reformed, we have the Conservative, or Orthodox. This is by far the most numerous, if not the most intelligent party. As their designation indicates, they are believers in the divinity of the Talmud. They maintain that Moses, whilst on the Mount,

received a written and unwritten law. The latter he communicated to Aaron, his sons, the elders, and then to the people. It is a collection of fables and legends, laws and precepts, unworthy of the praise Jews lavish upon it. Some good maxims are to be found in its ponderous tomes, but they are jumbled together with a mass of moral lumber, which, to say the least, painfully emphasises the lament of the prophet: 'Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?' The majority, who profess to belong to that school, scarcely know more of the oral law than the name. It comes to them as an heirloom, and, without any inquiry or personal investigation, which their ignorance of Rabbinical Hebrew renders impossible, they tacitly bow to its behests. During the last three decades, the efforts of the Missionary, and the irresistible progress of education, have weakened its authority; and should the long-agitated question of a translation ever be achieved, its doom is inevitable. Even at present, numbers who pretend to be attached to it, are so more by custom, habit, and the force of early training, than by any regard for its dogmas and teaching. They call themselves Orthodox Jews, but have no confidence in the ancestral faith.

"The third and last party consists of Rationalists, or, as they frequently style themselves, Freethinkers. It is an ominous sign of the decadence of religion, when multitudes among the very people 'to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants,' openly disown that which sheds the brightest lustre upon their race. This section, although very numerous, and embracing every rank and station, forms no distinct, organized community. In fact, it would be impossible to unite them; their theories are too antagonistic. They have no central rallying point. Chaos and confusion prevail in their camp. There is not a phase of unbelief, from the naturalist who denies a revelation, down to the Atheist, who says, 'There is no God,' that has not its advocates among them. In their ranks, the foreign element predominates. Culture, reason, and humanity, are words that are perpetually heard from their lips. Of course they pretend to be most liberal and tolerant towards all creeds. Christianity alone is obnoxious to them, and, with all the boasted victories of their principles, they justly fear that it will universally prevail, when their own godless aberrations are buried in oblivion.

"Happily, neither spurious reforms, nor wild, philosophical speculations, can satisfy the longing of the thoughtful Jew. He wants something more than vague phrases about God, conscience, and humanity. Such unmeaning platitudes he has heard again and again. He is weary of them. What he wants is a faith that can give certainty to doubt, hope to fear, and life to death. That Judaism cannot do this he is fully aware; and however much it may be opposed to his prejudices, he will yet have to flee for refuge to

Him, who alone can deliver from sin, and fill, with peace and joy in believing, the troubled heart. Just now, the clamour is for a reform of synagogue worship, a more spiritual service, and the abolition of certain prayers, rites, and ceremonies, which for ages have been considered the bulwarks of the Jewish faith. The organs of the Synagogue dilate almost every week on these topics, and quite recently the subject was also commented upon, in non-Jewish papers.

“But it must not be supposed that the conflicting views and sentiments on the subject of religion, which prevail among the Jews, have disposed them to regard with greater favour the doctrines of the Gospel. There are, no doubt, many happy exceptions; but the great majority are as inimical to the spiritual truth of Christianity, as the most fanatical Polish rabbi. That this is no exaggeration, the Jewish press unhesitatingly proclaims. The writers in these organs perpetually harp on the lessons of purity and love, which Judaism inculcates. They do not even hesitate to assert, that the sublime precepts of the Gospel were originally embodied in the traditions of the Synagogue.

“Now it must be admitted that in Protestant countries, where the Gospel exerts a salutary influence upon all, whether they accept or deny its divine origin, the Jews constitute an intelligent, industrious, and thrifty people, though not superior, as their rabbis and synagogue organs loudly maintain, to their Christian neighbours. Indeed, it is a notorious fact, that wherever Jews are to be found, they almost unconsciously assimilate themselves to the people among whom their lot is cast. Thus, in the East they are superstitious and ignorant—in Russia narrow-minded and fanatical—and in England and Germany sceptical and materialistic. Religion, with that latest class has been merged into a mere nationality. They loudly profess to be perfectly indifferent to what a man believes, so long as he follows what is designated ‘the dictates of conscience.’ The principles of toleration can scarcely go farther. But is that really the case? Certainly not. Scepticism and infidel speculation enjoy their sympathy, but not truth. Let any one avow himself a follower of Kant, Hegel, Darwin, Voysey, Bradlaugh, &c., his companions and friends will declare that he is an enlightened, unprejudiced man; but let him say, ‘I am a Christian,’ and instantly he is denounced, as a turncoat, hypocrite, and deceiver. His honesty, uprightness, and sincerity may be beyond all doubt; still he is misrepresented, traduced, and vilified. Indeed, it is a matter of gratitude and praise, that, in spite of persistent opposition, the Gospel should continue to exercise its divine potency in the conversion of so many. There is scarcely a race from whom it has won more distinguished trophies. Some of the brightest examples of Christian self-denial, zeal and devotion, were once members of the synagogue. During the darkest ages, the lamp of truth was held aloft by Jewish believers, and in our own days, not a few of the

most able defenders of the divine inspiration of Scripture, against the attacks of rationalistic writers, belong to the same nation. Truly God has not cast away His people. He has always had among them 'a seed to serve Him.'"

In another Report, the relationship existing between Judaism and Christianity is pointedly stated. It is there seen, that the freedom of thought, and the liberty of conscience, for which this country is distinguished, does not exempt the Jew from a variety of trials, when he becomes an enquirer into the truths of the Christian faith.

"There is a growing consciousness, that a religion professing to be divine, must be able to satisfy man's highest aspirations. That Judaism cannot do this, notwithstanding the loud assertions to the contrary of its exponents, is no longer questioned by the most rational and thoughtful. But what are they to do? Are they to secede from the Synagogue, and break the feeble tie that binds them to their people? No. They need not incur that odium. They need not violate their moral sensibilities. Modern Judaism does not exact such concessions. Within its pale, every phase of unbelief may find a refuge. It professes to respect all honest convictions, only they must not have the slightest tinge of Gospel truth. For that divinely revealed faith it has no plea, and admits of no apology. And this is perfectly natural. They are fully aware of the progress it is making, despite the opposition of secularism and a philosophy falsely so-called. To counteract its influence, which they are acute enough to perceive must sooner or later prove fatal to their own and to all other systems, that merely flatter human pride and foster a spirit of self-sufficiency; skill, learning, and every other resource, except open violence, are called into requisition. That this is no exaggeration, the Jewish press and pulpit sufficiently exhibit. Not a week passes, without some violent attack upon the Gospel and its doctrines. The arguments resorted to are almost invariably old, and devoid of learning and research. But this is not a matter of importance. The object is merely to denounce Christianity, and to extol the beauty and reasonableness of Judaism. Nor has the Missionary any cause to deplore these angry effusions. Men do not fight with phantoms, and the leaders of Jewish religious thought, are too wise to indulge in incessant attacks upon the Gospel, were they not prompted by a secret fear of its influence, among many in their own community.

"There are numbers of Jews who are fully persuaded that 'Jesus is the Christ,' who, notwithstanding their convictions, will not openly profess the faith they secretly cherish. Gladly would they do so, did they not shrink from the sacrifices the step would entail. This may appear highly inconsistent, but it ought to be



remembered, that it is not so easy to encounter the hostility of friends and the breath of slander, if not persecution; as many, who have never had to undergo such trials, are inclined to think. We live in an age emphatically notorious for a false and spurious liberalism. Almost every one, however narrow-minded and bigoted he may be as regards his own peculiar sentiments, will talk about tolerance and an unfettered conscience. Jews, in that respect, form no exception. They write in the most glowing strain on these topics. They will even cite disconnected and distorted quotations from the ponderous tomes of tradition, to prove that the rabbis in that respect, as in many others, were in advance of their times; and that only when persecutions arose, did they vent their indignation in harmless denunciations, and some not very charitable prayers. To such statements, the merest tyro in Talmudical lore knows well what value to attach. But it is not necessary to refer to tradition, to refute assertions; which facts, that need no comment, glaringly contradict. Let a Jew declare that he is persuaded that Jesus is the Son of God, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, and is not all that pseudo-liberalism instantly cast to the winds, and the most narrow-minded bigotry exhibited? Is not the man subjected to the vilest abuse and the most scurrilous remarks? Is not his character traduced, and his motives misrepresented? Does not slander direct against him its defaming breath, and denounce him as 'the offscouring of all things.' These manifestations of Jewish liberalism and tolerance deter many from ranging themselves under the banner of the cross. Of course it must not be supposed that all Jews are animated by a feeling of hatred toward 'meshumedim' (apostates), as converts are usually designated. There are exceptions, but the number is very limited, and restricted to men who have more sympathy with the Church than the Synagogue. Notwithstanding these, and many other obstacles and hindrances, the Gospel message is exciting greater attention. It is seen in the more careful study of God's word, the reading of good Christian books, the serious tone in which religious discussions are carried on, and in the readiness with which so many flock to the churches where the Missionary is advertized to preach.

"But as there is no cloud without its silver lining, so also the present religious condition of the Jews is not without some signs of hope. There are many among them who have no sympathy with infidelity. They long for something better than those reiterated, unmeaning, moral platitudes, which starve the soul. But where are they to quench their thirst? Are they to relapse into the exploded superstitions of rabbinical fables and legends? Are they to accept the chilling system of negation preached by modern rabbis, and pronounced as the most perfect conception of rational belief by the Jewish press? Or are they to seek for pardon, comfort and peace at the mercy-seat of the Triune Jehovah? The latter is no doubt the conviction which is gradually taking root in their hearts, and

drawing them nearer to the Saviour. Their co-religionists are evidently aware of this, and the efforts to counteract the movement are exhibited in the attacks upon the Gospel, with which the Synagogue literary organs abound.

“Despite many obstacles and hindrances, the work in which the missionaries are engaged proves to be most encouraging. They have, as usual, proclaimed the message of salvation, wherever an opportunity presented itself. The street, the workshop, the comfortable home, and the abode of wretchedness and destitution, have been the scenes of their labours. Sneers and blasphemies often greeted the message of mercy. Such salutations pained, but did not intimidate them. They remembered Him, who endured the contradiction of sinners; and, in imitation of His example, preached the truth as it is in Jesus, whether man would hear or forbear. Failures and disappointments must be anticipated. The Gospel would not be divine, had unbelief nothing to object, and ignorance and vice nothing at which to cavil. Its mission would not be to impart a new and holy life, did it command universal homage and acceptance. But whatever influences may retard its progress among the great mass, there is always a small remnant, who, conscious of their guilt, long for that comfort and peace which are alone to be found in the atoning blood of Christ. There have been many proofs of this. Many Jews attended the daily Bible class, for periods varying from one to six months. All, as might be expected, did not, however, become true Christians and upright believers. Some yielded to the entreaties of friends; others left England, as they could not obtain the means of subsistence; and not a few were dismissed on account of their unsatisfactory conduct. But, notwithstanding these disappointments, *eighteen adults*, exclusive of children, after mature preparation and many severe tests of their sincerity, publicly professed around the baptismal font, their unfeigned faith in the crucified Saviour. They had all to sacrifice friends, kindred, and every bond of cherished affection, on account of their convictions. It was a hard struggle to most of them to resist the tears and threats of those they loved, but there was no alternative. The words, ‘He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,’ rang in their ears, and without hesitation or delay, although their hearts bled, they took up the cross and resolved to follow Jesus.

“The ever-increasing accession of Christian Israelites to the Church, must not, however, be regarded as the only, or even the most reliable criterion of success. This idea, though widely prevalent, is quite fallacious. The agents rejoice over every sinner that repenteth; and hail with delight every brand plucked from the burning; but their chief work consists in proclaiming truth, exposing error, and entreating every one with whom they come in contact, to flee from his pharisaical refuge of lies to Him, on whom ‘the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.’ This is their vocation

and duty, and if, in dependence on the blessing which cometh from above, they carry out their commission, what does it matter where a man is baptized, or by whom the rite is performed? It is enough to know that their labours are not in vain, and that many, who dread the consequences it might entail, were they publicly to receive from the missionary's hands the outward sign of their inward spiritual regeneration, will one day be found amongst the number, who will constitute his joy and crown of rejoicing.

"Many Christians entertain most erroneous impressions on the subject; they believe that the Jews will ultimately be brought into the fold of Christ, but, under the present dispensation, regard the effort, if not quite hopeless, yet surrounded by almost insuperable difficulties. Now it may be admitted that many and formidable obstacles have to be contended with; but impediments to the acceptance of the Gospel are to be found amongst all unbelievers, no matter where they live or to what race they belong. The Jew, it is true, sees in Christ neither form nor comeliness, but the cause must be sought in external influences, and not in any instinctive incapacity to appreciate spiritual truth. Idolatry and corruption on the one hand, and want of zeal and enlightened exertions on the other, have led him to indulge in the illusion, that the doctrine of the cross is foolishness, and the atoning sacrifice on Calvary a superstitious Gentile invention. During the last thirty years, however, great changes have been effected in the moral and religious sentiments of the Jews. The narrow-minded precepts of the Talmud are being disregarded, or altogether repudiated. Synagogue worship is everywhere remodelled, and dogmas and principles once vehemently denounced are now as vehemently proclaimed. Even the style of preaching has undergone a reform, and hopes and aspirations breathed by the Christian preacher, are frequently copied and reproduced by the professedly orthodox rabbi. As usual extremes meet, and contempt for the traditions of men has led multitudes to reject the Word of God. That this is no exaggeration palpable facts abundantly prove. If you go to German Jews, you find infidelity and scepticism gaining universal ascendancy. 'Speak not to us of the New Testament, for we are sick and weary enough of the Old,' is the language that drops from the lips of the enlightened descendants of Abraham; and if you turn to their less philosophical and speculative brethren, born and brought up in these isles, you do not indeed hear much of scientific enquiry and research, but instead of it behold, what is equally soul-destroying, the steady advance of materialism, under the fashionable name of pure Theism; nor are Polish and Oriental Jews, those representatives of rabbinism and superstition, quite unaffected by these ever-spreading errors and doubts, which are sapping the basis of all Jewish faith in revealed truth. A reaction has set in among that class, and men who were once wont to regard every Talmudic fable and legend with reverence and awe, now question, without any hesitation, the veracity of

Moses, and the possibility of miracles. Judaism—real, genuine Judaism—is in its decrepitude and decay. It is no longer a question of creed, but of nationality. Happily the Jews as a nation are deeply imbued with religious feeling. It is an essential element in their character. They want a belief, but a belief that can remove their doubts and satisfy the longings of their hearts. This boon it is our privilege to bestow. God, in His distinguishing mercy, has made Christian England the guardian of that very Word, once deposited in the custody of the Jews; and if that true light from heaven has brightly shined into our hearts, and given us ‘the knowledge of the excellency of Christ Jesus our Lord,’ love and gratitude will move us to communicate to others the blessings we so richly enjoy. The encouragements are varied and inspiring. There was a time when an inquirer would only stealthily, or under cover of night venture to visit the missionary. He shrank from the very thought of being suspected of holding intercourse with such a dangerous character. But what may be witnessed at present? Fear has been superseded by respect, and suspicion by confidence; and, as regards the work itself, when we contemplate the changes in the moral condition of the Jews, and observe the gradual waning of their prejudices, or compare with former years the numbers that are continually swelling the ranks of Christian Israelites, who can help exclaiming, ‘What hath God wrought?’”

Many of the most important Parish Churches in the East of London were periodically opened for the ministrations of Mr. Stern. Those were generally selected, which were situated in the immediate neighbourhood of a large Jewish population. At the Jewish Festivals, in which the people were relieved from their daily avocations; large numbers were generally attracted by the Hebrew placards, and by the intimation, that in a particular Church, Mr. Stern would preach a special Sermon.

“In some instances, as in Whitechapel, where the Jews have their great centre, the Parish Church, on the eve of one of their principal festivals, was literally crowded with Jews; and a few days later, in an adjoining parish, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather and the unfavourable position of the church, about a hundred and fifty came to the service. Now the Missionary readily admits that all who attend these special services are not prompted by a desire for instruction. But what does that matter? The truth is proclaimed, the evidences on which the Christian’s hope is based are stated, the harmony between the Old and New Testament made clear. More than this the preacher cannot do. He cannot breathe life into his words. He cannot invest them with a visible proof of their divine energy and power. He cannot quicken the dead heart, and pour light into the darkened mind. Such, Omnipotence alone



can do. But the Missionaries are glad to hear that conversions may be traced to these services. Here is an instance :—Not long ago a Christian Israelite, who on Sunday is generally engaged in Evangelistic work, was preaching in a provincial town. After service, a man stepped into the vestry, and, grasping the preacher's hand, thanked him most affectionately for his address. As he perceived that the stranger was an Israelite, he inquired whether he accepted the doctrines he had just enunciated. 'Yes, I do,' was the ready reply; and before he could put another question, the man added, 'I presume you suspect my nationality. Well, it is true that I am an Israelite, and, perhaps, like yourself, once despised the Gospel. Accident, or may I not say Providence, led me into Whitechapel Church, where I heard Mr. Stern. I did not like that notorious apostate, but he arrested my attention, and made me feel uneasy. I went home and read the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, and now I believe in Christ as my Saviour, and also hope very soon to be received into the Christian Church.'

"A sermon addressed to Jews was preached in the Parish Church, Spitalfields. The congregation filled every nook and corner of that large place of worship. The heat was very oppressive, and it was thought that after service all would be glad to make their exit into the open air. But this was not the case with scores of men among the congregation. They crowded around Rev. H. A. Stern, and, in tones that scarcely admitted a refusal, demanded an answer to some queries which the sermon had suggested. The rector, Rev. Samuel Bardsley, advised Mr. Stern to accede to their request, on condition that they allowed him to act as chairman. To this all agreed, and at once repaired to the vestry, which, together with the vestibule leading to it, was literally crammed with an eager and interested multitude. The discussion, which was calm and dispassionate, lasted about an hour. All on parting expressed themselves pleased with this novel vestry meeting. There are Jews who do not approve of such full and candid investigation of their belief, and more than once Mr. Stern has been threatened with all sorts of maltreatment, if he ventured to occupy this or that pulpit. His Abyssinian experience has, however, made him indifferent to such alarms. Jewish congregations, whether they approve or disapprove of what is stated, have hitherto uniformly exhibited in the church the most exemplary decorum and attention, and the truths preached have not proved unproductive of results.

"In St. Mary's Church, Whitechapel; Christ Church, Spitalfields; and St. Stephen's, Commercial Road, there were present at each sermon from four to five hundred Jews and Jewesses. Their attention was highly gratifying. In leaving the sacred building, the Missionaries supplied suitable tracts to those who were willing to accept them. Every group had something to observe about the sermon, which proved that they had not been careless listeners. Recently, after a sermon in Christ Church, Spitalfields, a Jew, on going out, expressed



his regret that he had listened to a 'meshumed,' *apostate*. Immediately another retorted, 'What have you to object against that sermon? Did not the preacher prove all that he stated from our own Bible? But you are one of those fanatics who think that all the nonsense uttered by a Rabbi must be true, and every truth spoken by a Christian false.' These efforts, though hitherto unattended by any tangible results, imparted to multitudes some knowledge of the essential doctrines of the Bible. The seed thus sown in faith will, however, in God's own appointed time, assume a new form and substance. It cannot all waste or die. The dews of heaven will descend, and it will shoot up and witness that the Missionaries have not laboured in vain, nor expended their strength for naught.

"During the year, Mr. Stern preached at Swansea, Bristol, Birmingham, &c. Everywhere he had crowded congregations, including a great many Jews. On one occasion, on descending from the pulpit, two Jewish ladies came to shake hands with him. One, who was accompanied by a Christian friend, observed, 'Mr. Stern, you have got me into trouble. Mr. —, a man of influence among our people; noticed that I joined in the prayers. Well,' she immediately added, 'I don't care, for I am glad to have been here.' Now, whatever the immediate effect these Mission services may produce, they cannot fail to exert an influence which, in due time, will yield a blessing."

The ministry at the Episcopal Jews' Chapel in Palestine Place was also frequently a scene of much interest, and of undoubted blessing. Some of the hearers carried away with them the seeds of eternal life, and even in other lands, it was found to have taken root and brought forth fruit.

"A Missionary, who is actively working among the Jews in Western Germany, one day came to a small town inhabited by a great number of Jews, who enjoyed the questionable notoriety of being most hostile to every effort to teach them 'the way of the Lord more perfectly.' In his walks through the streets he encountered several, whom he tried to engage in a conversation, but, on perceiving his object, every one pointed him to the rich shopkeeper. The Missionary suspected that there was something wrong, but prompted by a sense of duty, he bent his steps towards the building. With a silent prayer for that help which cometh from above, he entered the shop. The proprietor, who knew him, sternly inquired what he wanted. Without any hesitation or apology, the Missionary at once announced the object of his errand. The man gave him another doubtful look, and then said, 'Come into my office.' When they were both seated, the owner of the shop, stretching out his right arm, said, 'I am glad to shake hands with you. A year ago I would not have done so; indeed, I may add, had you then

intruded yourself upon me, I would most likely, irrespective of consequences, have given you a sound horse-whipping. But I have no longer an aversion to men of your sacred vocation. I was recently in London, and during my stay there, I twice attended the Hebrew service in Palestine Place, and what I saw and heard has removed my prejudices against the Christian religion, and I am now quite willing to listen to whatever you may have to urge in its favour.' After a long and interesting conversation, the Missionary and the once fanatical shopkeeper parted like old and warmly attached friends. Numbers of Jews, who had watched in the hope of witnessing a violent scene, were perfectly amazed at this incomprehensible proceeding of the wealthiest and most Orthodox member of their community, and, in imitation of his example, the Missionary had at every house he visited a cordial reception."

It will be well, in connection with such occurrences, to recount a few instances of the effect produced by personal communication with the Jews, and the evidences which continually presented themselves of the sacrifices which many of them made, when they learnt "to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

"A highly educated Algerian Jew paid a visit to Mr. Stern. His language (which was excellent French) and deportment, indicated that he was a man occupying a superior position in life. After a brief conversation upon the prevailing infidel systems, which have sapped the foundation of all faith in Divine revelation among German and French Jews, he took out of his pocket the Society's tract on Isaiah liiii., and, holding it aloft, said in a solemn voice, 'Not many months ago I was a confirmed sceptic. I doubted the existence of a God, and smiled at the idea of a heaven and hell; but this pamphlet providentially fell into my hands. I thought of throwing it away, as I did not consider the topic of which it treated worthy of a philosophic mind. Curiosity, however, overcame my natural antipathy, and I read its contents. I was amazed and confounded. Here prophecy and its fulfilment were in striking harmony. I felt that no accident or contrivance could possibly have transformed the vision of the Prophet into the exact description of the scene enacted on Calvary. Renan was laid aside, and the Bible taken instead. I am not yet a Christian, but, with God's help, I hope to become one.' Another instance of the evangelizing influence which the reading of a good book may effect, is the conversion of an English Israelite. About a year ago, he was passing Palestine Place on a Saturday afternoon, and thought to while away half-an-hour by calling on the Missionary. Mr. Stern tried to engage him in serious conversation, but he was averse to it, and listened with chilling apathy. On going away he offered him a copy of that excellent little book,

'Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation,' requesting him to return it after he had read it. A few weeks later he called again, looking pale and haggard. Upon Mr. Stern inquiring the cause of his altered appearance, he informed him that he had just recovered from a very dangerous illness. There was a peace and calmness in his voice which indicated, far more than words could have done, that affliction's stroke had come to him as a messenger of love and mercy. During his painful sickness, he had learnt to appreciate the truth, which he had disregarded and opposed whilst in health. The little book which Mr. Stern had lent him had proved a guide to the Bible, and the Bible to the throne of grace. He was now most anxious to confess publicly that Saviour whose holy name he had in his ignorance blasphemed. Mr. Stern fixed three evenings in the week for his religious instruction, and although his work during the day often utterly exhausted his still weak frame, he never missed being present at the hour named. In compliance with his oft-reiterated request, Mr. Stern baptized him, and a few weeks later, his three children. He has since had to contend with many insults and petty persecutions, but he patiently submits to all for the Gospel's sake.

"Whilst the Missionaries were engaged in a serious and calm religious discussion with a group of respectable Israelites, an angry bigot rushed into their midst, and by his gesture and clamour tried to distract the attention of the speakers and those by whom they were surrounded. 'Not a man,' he exclaimed, 'is baptized, but costs the Society a large sum of money, and continues the profession of Christianity only so long as he is supported by them in a life of idleness.' He had scarcely ceased speaking, when a poor proselyte, on his way to the scene of his daily toil at the docks, came up to the Missionaries in order to exchange a few words with them. The Jew, mistaking him for a co-religionist, urged him vehemently to leave the spot, and have nothing to do with such men. 'Are you in want of employment?' he cried; 'come with me at once. I employ many people; you shall be paid as the most favoured among them, and have the satisfaction of remaining faithful to the religion of your forefathers.' The Missionaries saw that here was a glorious opportunity for publicly rebutting the persistent charge, that our converts are actuated by mercenary motives, and waited anxiously for the dock-labourer's reply. Raising his toil-worn hands in the direction of his vehement interlocutor, he said, in a clear voice, 'You are mistaken if you think that I sell my conscience for money. I am a Christian, and as such, work with these hands for the maintenance of myself and family. I have seen better days as a Jew, and was not brought up to manual labour; but I am content with my lot, and thank God for having brought me to the knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ.' His opponent was disconcerted, and had not another word to say. His libel had received a dignified and befitting reproof."

The number who were baptized, during our Missionary's connection with the Home Mission, was considerable. The following, among a large number of similar occurrences, will be a sufficient illustration. Mr. Stern's comments will also clearly indicate, how careful he was, that none should be admitted to this sacred ordinance but those, of whom he had full reason to believe, that they had passed "from death unto life."

"A solemn sight was witnessed in the Episcopal Jews' Chapel, Palestine Place, on Sunday afternoon. Besides the usual congregation, consisting of converts and regular inquirers, there were at least forty strange Jews present. The report that a baptism would take place, no doubt attracted many. An exhibition of restlessness, if not of irreverence, was anticipated. To my agreeable surprise and satisfaction, they were all wonderfully quiet and serious. Every one joined in prayer and praise, like devout and earnest Christians. Upon closer inspection of the congregation, I discovered that more than half had occasionally attended my Bible-class, or heard the message of salvation in Mission Halls. It was certainly a most impressive sight to see a number of Jews, who make no profession of being even inquirers, bending their knees and lifting up their voices in prayer and praise to the Triune Jehovah. It shows that there is a leavening process going on, and I fully expect that before long multitudes will publicly confess Him whom to know is life eternal.

"The two Israelites who were received into the Church, had both been under Christian instruction for a considerable time. Of their sincerity and uprightness I have not the least doubt. One of the candidates, in order to avow his convictions, had to leave a comfortable home, and a position that offered him bright worldly prospects. However, I trust that he has experienced the import of the Saviour's words, Matt. xix. 29, and enjoys peace in his heart, communion with God, and the assurance of the pardon of his sins. The other candidate for some years resided in Berlin, where he had a good business. Disappointments proved to him a blessing, they led him to reflect upon the future, and he can now say with the Psalmist, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.'

"There are several more enquirers preparing for the ordinance of Holy Baptism. Some are anxious to be admitted into the New Testament Covenant, but I invariably refuse to accede to such requests, unless I see, that the applicant is, as far as one can judge, a true believer and sincere Christian."

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE WANDERERS' HOME.

In every country of the world, a Refuge from religious persecution has been an acknowledged want. The history of Missions among the Roman Catholics and heathen nationalities, attest the fact. It cannot be, therefore, a matter of surprise, that this has always been one of the experiences of Missionaries among the Jews. To protect enquirers against the bigotry and intolerance of their relatives, and to secure some means by which they might independently earn their daily bread, has been always a source of anxiety. These considerations led Dr. Ewald, in the year 1853, to open a small Home, into which a limited number of enquirers might be received, where they might be examined and tested, and where the means might be afforded of giving them a temporary shelter from want and persecution. He was encouraged in this undertaking by many energetic friends; and although "the Wanderers' Home," which was the fruit of this effort, was managed by its own Committee, and supported by direct contributions, it received the sanction and cordial sympathy, and the occasional help, of the Committee of the London Society. Within its walls, a large number of anxious enquirers received religious instruction, and enjoyed time and opportunity for the careful investigation of the doctrines of the Christian faith. From this, some were drafted to the Operative Jewish Converts Institution, where they acquired the knowledge of a trade which secured their independence; or other opportunities presented themselves for useful and honourable employment.

Mr. Stern entered with alacrity upon this part of the work. In Bagdad and Constantinople, he had acquired some experience of



its necessity and its advantages; and throughout the whole of his labours in connection with the Home Mission, its efficiency was fully maintained.

The premises in which "the Home" had been established, being required by the Committee of the London Society, Mr. Stern took measures for the erection of new and more commodious buildings. These were carefully designed and built, in order to satisfy the wants of such an Institution. The day on which they were opened was made the occasion of much rejoicing. Mr. Stern removed to a house adjoining the new "Home." Personal inconveniences did not influence him in his course of action. Many would have deprecated close and intimate contact with those, who at times were the source of much discomfort and trouble. But he felt, that it would be an advantage, that the inmates should be under his own eye, and that the proximity of the buildings would enable him to act with greater decision and judgment, as circumstances might require.

His Annual Reports of this Institution were always full of information and interest, and afford the best indices of the work which he gently but assiduously carried on in the Metropolis. His knowledge of many languages was among his many distinguishing qualifications for this peculiar and most important undertaking, which brought him into communication with Jews belonging to almost every nationality. The Annual Reports furnished a very lucid epitome of the state and character of the Jews generally, as well as the special and individual circumstances of those to whom he personally ministered.

"Jews delight to boast. It is one of their most consistent weaknesses. They did so in the days of the prophets, when they exclaimed, 'We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us;' and they manifest the same spirit of self-laudation in our enlightened times. Only a few months ago it was stated in a leader of the synagogue organ, that 'if Judaism did not convert the world when it was ignorant, there is yet reserved for it the greater glory of converting it when it has reached the highest pinnacle of enlightenment.' Now we always thought that Judaism (of course Old Testament Judaism) attained its plenitude of glory in the days of Isaiah, when, with an unprecedented fulness, the stream of prophecy overflowed the land. But this opinion is evidently not shared by Jews,

who, like the editor of the communal weekly, anticipate a future that will develop a Judaism so winsome, attractive, and reasonable, as to ensure universal acceptance and fealty. We were almost inclined to believe, that educated Jews deprecated such bombastic effusions, but it appears that this is not the case. Vanity and self-conceit still retain their sway, and, as we have frequently been told, woe betide the rabbi or editor of a synagogue paper, who dares to offend the national pride.

“But the arrogant assumptions of modern Judaism, if they are to carry conviction, must be based upon very different arguments than mere bold assertions and inflated sentences. Thoughtful men require something more conclusive. They want facts, and not fine-spun theories. Judaism never exerted any palpable influence upon mankind. It was always exclusive. That of Moses, which had a Divine origin, was restricted to the Promised Land, and that of the rabbis, which was of human contrivance, did no good to the Jews, and repelled the truth-seeking Gentiles. But the Judaism of the future, which is to achieve the most brilliant triumphs, whence is it to come? With what authority is it to be invested? What doctrines is it to teach? What motives for submission to its dictates will it furnish? It cannot be the Judaism of our own day, which is split into all sorts of sects, and represents the most extravagant and contradictory religious ideas. There is scarcely a phase of unbelief, error, and superstition, which it does not espouse.

“Half a century ago that was not the case. Judaism at that time presented an undivided unity. It had one creed, one form of worship, and one immutable code of laws. But all has changed. The progress of education, the zealous efforts of Missionaries, and the onward flow of light and knowledge have, to a great extent, metamorphosed the whole system of Jewish belief. A reaction set in, and all that had hitherto been regarded as sacred and unassailable was henceforth, at least by the cultured and educated, denounced as superstitious and demoralizing. Some, in their zeal for reform, outstripped others, who were not quite so thorough and radical. This led to angry discussion, strife, and schism. New synagogues were built, new modes of worship introduced, and new doctrines publicly enunciated. A rupture was created which it is not probable will ever be healed.

“Hence the question naturally arises, What form of Judaism is finally to obtain the boasted universal ascendancy? Is it the Judaism of the Talmud? This, educated Jews themselves confess, is opposed to whatever tends to promote intellectual culture and the nation's moral and social welfare. Is it the Judaism of reform? This is still in a chaotic condition, and varies to suit the advanced or moderate opinions of the communities where it is professed. But perhaps it is the Judaism which seeks to assimilate itself to all the vagaries of the modern schools of thought? This also, not-

withstanding grand pretensions, offers nothing but hazy speculations which rob man of his God, and the heart of its comfort and hope.

"It is, however, frequently asserted by Jews, that the work which their ancestors did in olden times, their descendants are destined to carry on far more effectively in the fast approaching future. Now without dilating on that glorious era, when the triumphs of the Cross will be consummated amidst the hallelujahs of adoring nations, we cannot join in the exultant pœan of a certain class of Jews, who incessantly reiterate that the world is indebted to their people for the knowledge of God and of His Word. That the truth revealed to Jewish prophets and apostles, dispelled the darkness that brooded over the fairest lands and made it light in the Lord, no one can dispute, but it was accomplished in spite of the nation's determined opposition and persecution. Peter and Paul, the three thousand converts on the Day of Pentecost, the five thousand of whom we subsequently read, and the thousands mentioned by St. James, were unquestionably Jews, who loved their Master, and laboured and toiled to promote His glory. They shrank from no danger, and dreaded no kind of torture and death in the zealous pursuit of their holy vocation; but all this they did contrary to the injunction of the elders, priests, and rulers of the people. Had the designs of these men succeeded, the voice of mercy would have been drowned in the blood of its martyrs; and idolatry, with all its attendant pollution, might still, humanly speaking, reign unchecked throughout this and every other Christian land.

"Now we unhesitatingly assert, that synagogue Judaism has always been, and still is, most hostile to the Church and the progress of Christianity. Jewish writers and preachers know this perfectly well. They are not unaware that the superstitious system of the Talmud is as much opposed to the Gospel, as light is to darkness; and yet they persistently reiterate, that, through them, mankind has been taught to worship God. If this statement emanated from men, who repudiate the traditions of the Talmud, there might be some excuse for the assumption. We firmly believe that Christianity and the Judaism of the Old Testament are not opposing creeds. Just the reverse. The same spirit that speaks in the Gospel also speaks in the Law and the Prophets; and he, that turns a deaf ear to the words of Christ, also resists the voice of the Old Testament seers. Christianity is not a religion invented by apostles: it is the theme of a long train of inspired writers, whose words were the echo of the Divine promise of love and mercy. From the very first declaration, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head,' up to the last injunction in the Old Testament Scriptures, 'Remember ye the law of Moses,' the hope of a coming redemption forms the chief subject of revelation. In this respect Christianity and ancient Judaism are identical. They teach one and the same doctrine, and point the penitent sinner to one and the same Redeemer. But, whilst Biblical Judaism and Christianity,

alike direct the eye of faith to a loving and atoning Saviour, Rabbinic Judaism, on the contrary, controverts and discards this all-important, soul-saving truth; and yet, with a strange inconsistency, its upholders pretend to have moulded the religious sentiments of the world.

“Such idle boasts need no refutation. Modern or rabbinical Judaism is a system averse to the Scriptures and the holiest principles of the Christian faith. It owes its existence to contingencies inseparably connected with the destruction of Jerusalem and the cessation of the Temple service. Without such a centre of unity as the traditional belief, the Jews would inevitably have sunk into infidelity, or have been absorbed by the races among whom they were scattered. Rabbinism forestalled the catastrophe, and unconsciously worked out the designs of Providence in preserving the integrity of the nation.

“Rabbinism has, however, outlived its time. It no longer exerts any influence or power. Educated Jews everywhere denounce it as an exploded system. Unfortunately, extremes always meet, and, with the rejection of error, men are also generally disposed to throw off the restraints imposed by truth. This is the case with enlightened Jews. Their apologists may, with proud self-complacency, dilate on their wealth, their unity, their national aspiration, their costly synagogues, splendid charity, and a variety of other real or imaginary virtues; but no one can consistently deny, that honest conviction and genuine faith in the ancestral creed have almost, if not entirely, disappeared from among the educated classes. With most of them, religion is merely a condescending acknowledgment of a Supreme Creator. There is no consciousness of sin, no quest for pardon, and no passionate longing for that infinite love so touchingly expressed by the Psalmist, when he exclaims: ‘My soul thirsteth for God.’ Their synagogue sermons, communal organs, and religious publications breathe a spirit of self-sufficiency and laudation which even the conceit of the ancient rabbis did not excel. Hence, as a natural result, conscience is dormant, and arrogance and pride are repulsively cultivated. The fear of a holy God, the knowledge of sin, and the need of peace and consolation—the instinctive yearning of every soul not utterly dead to the terrors of the judgment to come—are all avoided as topics, that belong to a by-gone age, and quite unsuited to our advanced intellectual times.

“But the anti-Christian Judaism of the rabbis and modern Jewish reformers, who jointly claim the merit of having conquered the world by the force of truth, will not always deck itself with spurious honours, nor espouse false doctrines. Truth is yet to supplant error, and the revealed Word of God, the aberrations of men. The Israel of the future will yet be to the whole world, what believing Israelites were to the Church after the Day of Pentecost. The godly remnant, the holy seed, those preserved from the final apos-



tasy, which is rapidly developing itself, are, as the Prophet declares, 'to blossom and to bud, and to fill the face of the earth with fruit.' The language of the Prophet corresponds with the words of the Apostle in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the Church is reminded of the benefits she derived from Israel's fall, and of the still greater blessing that will flow into her, through Israel's restoration. At present, the tabernacle of David is fallen down, but it is to rise again, and to inaugurate the reign of righteousness and peace, when the residue of men will seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom the Lord's name shall be called. Thus prophecy declares, that, in the future, just as in the past, Israel will be God's instrument in effecting the most sublime moral and spiritual revolution. It will not, however, be the work of the nation allied with every false system 'against the Lord and against His Anointed,' but the godly remnant quickened, renewed, and sanctified by the Spirit, who 'shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass.' Nor is the decisive crisis, according to all appearances, very far off. Many are the ominous indications of its near approach. Already multitudes of Jews have joined the hostile forces of that ever-swelling anti-Christian confederacy, which is to be fully developed in the latter days. Already they boast that their antagonism to Christianity is doing much more injury to the Church, than missionary efforts will ever be able to do to the synagogue. Already in ecstatic strains, they celebrate the onward march of ideas, subversive of the most essential Gospel truths.

"Happily, these ungenerous sentiments towards the Christian faith are not cherished by all. It is only the professed advocates of the religion of reason and intellectual progress that are inimically disposed towards its teachings. The thoughtful, serious, and unprejudiced, do not share their views. They are too conscious of the debt of gratitude they owe to the benevolent and elevating principles which underlie the Gospel. Christ is not regarded by them with indifference, but with profound veneration and love. They admire his ethics, laud His morality, and even admit the beautiful adaptation of His doctrines to the irrepressible longing of the heart, yearning for peace, immortality, and communion with God. Here, however, their concessions end. Saving impressions of the truth they have not, and the burden of sin and the need of a Divine Saviour they do not feel. Religion is with them more an object of intellectual research than an imperious instinct of a troubled and anxious soul. They dislike Judaism, and do not trouble themselves about the claims of Christianity. The world is their temple, and wealth and pleasure the idols they worship. It is sad to see men, acute and wise in mundane matters, perfectly insensible to all that pertains to the welfare of their souls. No doubt this callousness, must in part be attributed to the dead and mechanical form of religion, under which they were brought up.



“It is nevertheless satisfactory to know, that the New Testament is read, and the sublime lessons it inculcates thoroughly valued. We should, of course, hail with delight more sensible tokens of its renewing, quickening, and regenerating power. But for such demonstration of the Holy Spirit’s efficacy, we must prayerfully wait. Our present duty consists in sowing the seed, which, under the Divine blessing, will ripen, and burst forth in strong faith, holy walk, and courageous confession. This is our work, and, God helping us, we know that it will redound to His praise in the salvation of souls. Patience, perseverance, and intercession must not be intermitted. They are indispensable in all Mission-fields, but especially in that of the Jews. Fanciful visions should not be cherished. Vast accessions to the Church ought not to be expected. The Jewish heart is not impervious to good impressions, nor insensible to saving conviction. It must not, however, be supposed that the prejudices of centuries can be obliterated at once, and truths, so long rejected and despised, accepted without a deep and ardent struggle. What we have to do is to preach the Gospel; and, if we are faithful in the discharge of our sacred obligations, we need not fear that our labour and strength will be expended for nought. In proof of this we may refer to some of the incidents connected with our work, as they forcibly illustrate that the Gospel is still in our day, as it was in times of yore, the power of God unto salvation to the Jew as well as to the Gentile.

“It is a well-known fact that the rebound from superstition is unbelief, and from error very often truth. Of this, the missionary to the Jews has constant proofs. Persuaded of the untenableness of the ancestral belief, the Jew, like the Roman Catholic, without much inquiry or research, plunges recklessly into the opposite extreme, and becomes either an open or secret unbeliever. He is not happy, however. Nature has endowed the Semitic race with a religious instinct, which no human power can thoroughly eradicate. This is particularly the case with Oriental Jews, who have not long been domiciled in Europe.”

In another Report, Mr. Stern, dwelling on this subject from a like point of view, vividly describes the application of the vision of Ezekiel to the state of Israel, during the period of their long-protracted dispersion..

“It was a sad sight, which presented itself to the Prophet Ezekiel, when, in a vision, he beheld the valley of dry bones. In all directions a ghastly spectacle met his gaze. There, lay around him a vast field covered with hideous skeletons. Appalled and oppressed, he traversed in solemn silence this painful scene of desolation and death, when suddenly a voice addresses to him the startling question: ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ The prophet, who is not a stranger to the speaker, replies with becoming meekness:

'O Lord God, thou knowest.' No human power can quicken the dead, and recall to earth and time the departed. The Almighty alone can do it, for nothing is impossible with Him, and, if it is in conformity with His Divine will, this valley of desolation and gloom can be transformed into a temple of adoration and praise. And now He, who is infinite in power as He is unfathomable in mercy, commands: 'Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord,' and, whilst the words are still trembling upon the lips of the seer, a rustling is heard among the dry bones, the skeletons move, the eyes sparkle, the hearts pulsate, and they rise from their death-like slumber an exceeding great army to magnify and laud God's holy name.

"The vision the prophet beheld, graphically portrays the condition of the Jews during the last eighteen centuries. No nation ever enjoyed greater privileges or more grievously abused them. Inflated with pride and self-sufficiency, they have always regarded themselves as the special objects of Divine complacency, and have looked forward with joy to the advent of a Messiah, who would gratify all their cherished dreams of temporal splendour and glory. But hope deferred has wrought the wonted result, and made the heart sick. Disappointed in their anticipations of a Deliverer, who would verify all their fanciful visions of wealth, dominion, and power; multitudes have lost all confidence in the prophetic declarations, and attribute the splendid descriptions of a Messianic era to the poetic aspirations of patriotic enthusiasts.

"But whatever anti-scriptural delusions a section of the Jews may, for a time, entertain; it cannot be said that, as a nation, they have renounced those expectations, for which their ancestors made the greatest sacrifices. The reverse is the case. A spirit of deep devotion dwells in their hearts. They are conscious of it, and, in their intellectual arrogance, struggle to suppress it. Under the plausible pretext of purifying religion from the accretions, with which superstition has overlaid it, they have almost unconsciously wandered away from the God of their fathers, and adopted theories subversive of all faith in His Word. But, whilst we deplore the rejection by Israel of that revelation which is their nation's chief glory, and their adoption of the materialistic motto, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' we cannot help contemplating with satisfaction this melancholy restlessness, which, ere long, must effect its own cure. It is the inevitable reaction of centuries of mental and spiritual bondage. A belief based upon human traditions cannot possibly exact the obedience of enlightened and thinking men. The careless and superstitious may bow to its dictates, but not the serious and intelligent. This is the case with multitudes of Jews in the present day. Weary and sick of the falsehoods of the rabbis, they have drifted into all sorts of fashionable theories, until at last they find themselves completely lost in the labyrinthine maze of scepticism and infidelity. But the night is always darkest before

the dawn of day. Of this the history of the Church furnishes many an illustration. It will be the same with the modern unbelief of the Jews. They will, before long, see the folly of that rationalistic philosophy, which only recognizes the gods that walk before their eyes. Already, symptoms of a craving for something more adapted to meet the wants of the human heart, than hazy disquisitions about 'the unknowable,' are manifesting themselves; already, learned chimeras, which some years ago were regarded as the sublimest discoveries in the realm of moral and spiritual truth, have been scattered to the winds; already, in many a study and lonely chamber, the Bible has supplanted the books and pamphlets of anti-scriptural writers."

It is apparent, that the conscientious Missionary never disguised, nor employed any qualifying terms, in portraying the character and disposition of those to whom he preached the Gospel. Whatever might have been the dignity of their past relations to God—however distinct the evidence that He, in the exercise of His own gracious purposes, was ever keeping them as "the apple" of His "eye," and however clear the assurance of their future glory—Mr. Stern never failed to state with fullness and point, the nature and cause of their present unbelief.

"The Reformed, or rather rationalistic Jews, perpetually boast of the noble principles of humanity, tolerance, and reasonableness, that underlie their sublimated Judaism, which is to be the religion of the future. It is a string upon which they are never weary of harping. They are so anxious to impress this fact upon the world, that their pulpits and newspapers are perpetually repeating the same story. It is quite painful to witness the efforts they are making to exalt their new Judaism, at the expense of Christianity. But, in spite of all their vaunts, the people are beginning to be aware, that a philosophic Judaism that believes nothing, is doing them as little good as a rabbinic Judaism that believes all things. The latter, it is true, has kept them a distinct and separate nation, but, morally and socially, it has done them incalculable harm; whilst Christianity, on the contrary, wherever it finds an entrance, proves its divine origin by the blessings that follow in its train. Now, to admit that the Church has done for mankind what the synagogue never could do, would be a homage to the Gospel, which these narrow-minded rationalists are very loth to render. Hence their incessant boast of a reformed Judaism, the pretended embodiment of everything noble, philosophic, and rational. It is only to be regretted that such silly notions should be espoused by men of intellect and culture, who have virtually seceded from the synagogue, and reduced their Judaism to a mere nationality. Religion in the true sense of the word they have none. In the advent of a

Messiah they do not believe ; even the Bible they regard as an old-fashioned, obsolete work, quite unsuited to our advanced ideas. And yet their philosophical speculations do not afford them comfort, nor remove the dread of death, the grave, and the judgment to come. Their desire is merely to glorify a rationalistic Judaism. Christianity they hate. Its dogmas and spiritual teaching are repugnant to their worldly views and sentiments. Owing to the ill-feeling, which their attacks upon the Gospel are calculated to excite among Christians, they have of late become a little more guarded ; still, whenever the faintest shadow of a favourable opportunity presents itself, these champions of a spurious tolerance give vent, to the rancour they cherish against the religion of Christ. This artful opposition should not slacken, but increase our efforts for their spiritual welfare. We have only to follow the example of St. Paul. He had to sustain the malice of his former co-religionists to its utmost extent, and yet it did not damp his zeal, nor cool his ardent solicitude for their salvation. Whatever town he visited, the synagogue was the place where he first proclaimed the message of redeeming mercy. Fanatical violence did not make him indifferent to their perishing souls. Was he not himself once a persecutor ? and surely, that divine power, which could change his heart, could effect the same in the case of others. This thought no doubt sustained him amidst all the labours and toils, hardships and privations, he had to endure. Nor need Missionaries, especially those who seek the conversion of Israel, care for the clamour and rage of infidel and superstitious Jews. We have to warn and to entreat, and, if the result does not quite correspond with our expectations, still some will listen to the truth, believe, and also live. There is a 'remnant according to the election of grace,' and we prayerfully anticipate the day when the veil which is upon the nation's heart will be lifted up, and they will look unto Him, who died that they might eternally live. Already a ripple can be discerned on the face of the dark waters of Jewish unbelief,—the premonitor of the storm, which will ere long purify the moral atmosphere, and make all light and gladness in the Lord.

"This anticipation is not an illusive dream. Numerous are the indications which justify the fond hope that the latter day of glory is not far off. To refer to them all would occupy far more time and space than we can afford. But it must be patent to every careful observer of the signs of the times that we are approaching an important crisis. Never at any former period did infidelity make such rapid strides, or assume such a defiant attitude. Lawlessness, with its twin sisters, socialism and communism, is also shamelessly held up as the panacea for all the evils that afflict poor humanity. Religion, too, is becoming a round of sensuous rites, without any sanctifying energy and power. Distrust and jealousy pervade all classes. It exists between employer and employed, between capital and labour, between governments and people. Even nations are



not free from this failing, which, at any time, may plunge Europe and Asia into a terrible conflict. The position of the Jews is also becoming a difficult and perplexing problem. Forty or fifty years ago they were content to be a tolerated people ; at present they are aspiring to develop into a dominating power. Nor is their ambition altogether unreasonable. Already they control—more so on the Continent than in England—the Exchange and Chambers of Commerce. Literature, too, they seek to make a monopoly. The Liberal press in Germany, Austria, Italy, and to some extent in France, is completely in their hands. They are either the proprietors, editors, or principal contributors. Nor are they indifferent to science, philosophy, and the higher branches of knowledge. Jews occupy distinguished professorial chairs in the Universities, and shine as eminent judges, lawyers, and physicians. Titles of nobility, which they ardently covet, few possess ; but instead of these, they eclipse the most aristocratic families, by their magnificent palatial residences and extensive estates. Even in the Senates and Councils of Kings they hold no mean position. Indeed it is admitted by all thoughtful men, that, if the Jews continue to advance in the same ratio during the next thirty or forty years as they have done within the last fifty, they will obtain unlimited power, and dominate the world. Not very long ago, the learned Professor Ebrard, of the University of Erlangen, in speaking of the signs of the times, wrote : ‘ It appears as if our age might be compared to the last year of the ministry of Christ, when the great mass of people, who before had followed Him with a half-blinded enthusiasm, turned away from Him and left Him alone with His disciples. In the present day, that same Semitic people, having entered upon a phase of modern Saduceeism, are working as the chief agitators, to turn the masses of the Germanic and Germano-Roman nations astray from their Christian faith.’ Wealth, rank, and influence, gratifying as they are to their pride, have not won them the respect and esteem of the people among whom they dwell. On the contrary, their offensive arrogance and anti-Christian attitude have tended to bring upon them a good deal of hatred and contempt. The thoughtful and reflecting are fully conscious of this. They deplore that ostentatious parade of riches, and open espousal of the most dangerous doctrines. We have repeatedly heard men of this stamp express their just fear of some retributive vengeance. They fully anticipate the outbreak of a revolution, and the calamities in which it is certain to involve their people. Besides that, men of intelligence, whose views are not limited to time, are daily growing more and more weary of the everlasting repetition of that false humanitarianism—the creed of modern Jewish Saducees. They want something better than mere unmeaning, moral platitudes, which neither appease the restless mind, nor impart comfort to the anxious heart. That the Gospel only can affect this, many are quite willing to admit.



“Thus, quite recently, a Jew, who is no mean scholar, published a small work, in which he endeavours to prove that Christianity is the only religion which reveals a plan of salvation in harmony with infinite wisdom, and the craving of the sinful heart. He advises his co-religionists to join the Christian Church. Another writer, in a pamphlet which bears the title, ‘New Epistles to the Hebrews,’ says : ‘I am a strict Jew, and also a true philanthropist. My Jewish as well as my human feelings revolt against this new Judaism, which is based not on the law and the prophets, but on money.’ And again, in speaking of a restoration, he observes: ‘The events, which are transpiring in the east, may bring this project within the compass of probable contingencies, and for that very reason, we should hasten to acknowledge Christianity as the religion of the world’s redemption, and be proud of it as the consummation of the most glorious scriptural promises. Only by admitting this great fact, can we come into possession of the Promised Land, and of all the sacred memorials of Christendom, which will never be entrusted to a nation incapable of appreciating them.’ This is the language of an educated orthodox Jew. It is an indication of the budding of the fig-tree. Half a century ago no Jew durst express such sentiments without incurring the severest penalties. But times have changed. Jews of culture and superior intellectual attainments, are actually becoming able defenders of the Gospel, against the attacks of their own co-religionists.

“Nor is our work unaffected by these incipient movements which agitate so many Jewish communities. There is a faint glimmer of light perceptible on the dark horizon of a creedless Judaism, which announces that the night is far spent and the day is at hand. Multitudes admit that Judaism, in spite of its shifting and accommodating phases, is not a religion that can ever obtain universal credence. It is a system of doubt and negation utterly unsuited to the restless heart, that seeks a sure haven of rest. Jews themselves acknowledge that it has done no good to their people, nor will it benefit any other race. Such, they admit, is not the case with Christianity; on the contrary, wherever the Gospel is accepted, an improvement in the moral, social, and spiritual condition of the people immediately takes place. Arrogant modern Sadduceeism, which delights to prate about progress, humanity, and a mock universal brotherhood, cannot brook a concession so galling to its pride; hence hatred, malice, and spiteful misrepresentations. But we are indifferent to an opposition, which borrows all its arguments against the truth from the oft-refuted literary productions of notorious infidel writers. Thank God, the work is progressing, and will continue to do so till the Jews as a nation look unto Him whom their fathers pierced, and exclaim: ‘Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.’”

The persecutions to which the Jews in Russia have been, within the last few years, exposed, are well known to every reader of passing events. This current of anti-Semitic feeling has widely prevailed throughout the whole Continent of Europe. That the prosperity and success of the Jews, in every calling to which they have applied themselves, has been the chief cause of the hostility and distrust with which they have been treated, is beyond all controversy. But these persecutions have been the most remarkable signs of the times. It appears to have been a movement, directed, in a certain sense, by the hand and power of God, in order to disturb the illusion with which prosperity and ease filled the minds of many of the people, that in the bosom of those nationalities, in the midst of which they have been sojourning, they should continue to have their rest. Mr. Stern's comments on this subject, in one of the Reports of "the Wanderers' Home," are suggestive and interesting :

"The progress of knowledge, the spread of Gospel light, and the loud boast of a universal brotherhood, one would have thought had for ever exorcised the spirit of persecution and racial antipathies. But this illusion the events of the last two years have sadly dispelled. The anti-Semitic movement in Germany, the outrages in Russia, and the ill-disguised hostility manifested towards that people in other lands, give emphasis to the Scripture statements, which so minutely foreshadow their painful career. Israel is not to find a permanent peaceful home away from the land of their fathers. Palestine is their inheritance, and they will yet possess it, 'from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates.' For the last twenty or thirty years their watchword has been, 'We will be as the nations about us.' This desire a decade ago, according to all appearances, seemed about to be realized. Civil and political equality broke down the last barrier, which separated the Jew from the Christian. In Roman Catholic as well as in Protestant countries they rose to positions of great influence in the financial, literary, and political world. Jewish bankers, Jewish *litterati*, and Jewish statesmen, controlled to a considerable extent the exchange, the press, and even the Councils of Kings. High position, social influence, and political power induced many to indulge in the illusion, that the golden age of the Messianic era, of which the prophets spoke, had at length dawned upon them, and that uninterrupted prosperity would henceforward be their coveted lot. From this false security the recent outburst of a wide-felt hostility unexpectedly roused them. It scattered to the winds all their proud visions of a godless millennium, and made them involuntarily cry, 'We looked for peace, and no good came—and for a time of health, and behold trouble.'"

Turning now to the work carried on within the precincts of "the Home," there are some characteristics which require our careful attention. The *status* in life of those who were brought within the influence of the Gospel is described—the lands from whence they came—and the necessity of an acquaintance with various languages, in order to hold communication with them. That many of these persons, brought up in affluence, and previously filling respectable positions in life, were not only inquirers, but believers, will eventually appear.

"Already we see in the wide-spreading spirit of inquiry and restlessness the dawn of a brighter day. Jews cannot long exist without some belief. The religious sentiment is part of their very nature. They are, however, like most people, inclined to extremes. Imposed upon by the Rabbis, they have become distrustful of the Prophets. In negations and rationalism they, nevertheless, find nothing to satisfy their reason nor to allay their doubts. The missionary excited their fears and misgivings, and the missionary, too, must also communicate to them the Gospel of salvation and peace.

"This shaking of the dry bones is also perceptible in the study and better appreciation of the Gospel. Formerly any one possessing a New Testament was denounced as an apostate, and liable to be expelled from the synagogue. Jewish children, who attended Christian schools, blotted out the name of Jesus wherever it occurred. It was never mentioned without a vile imprecation, or a coarse expression of contempt. Times have changed. The New Testament is no longer under a ban. It is to be found in the mansions of the rich, and in the humble dwellings of the poor. It is quoted in Jewish newspapers, and very often cautiously referred to in synagogue sermons. It is read by high and low, the literate and the illiterate. Some study it to find objections, others to obtain a correct knowledge of the Christian faith, and not a few to extract from its pages a perfect rule of life, and a response to allay the fears that trouble and perplex their minds.

"Only quite recently, a Jewish lady of rank and wealth, who reads the New Testament every day, was asked by a friend why she was so fond of that simple book. Instantly she retorted, 'You call it a simple book because it discards embellishments; I, on the contrary, call it a noble, if not a Divine book, for it satisfies the loftiest aspirations and inculcates the purest morality.' Jews attribute the almost universal dissatisfaction with dogmas and articles of belief, which age and custom have rendered sacred, to the progress of knowledge and the sceptical spirit of the times; but we know, and candid Israelites have repeatedly acknowledged, that to the efforts of missionaries must be traced the inquiry and research into the domain of religion, which pervades their community.

“The last and most tangible proof of the blessing attending our labours among Jews is to be found in the large number of proselytes who, within a limited period, have been received into the Church of Christ. Antecedent to the establishment of regularly-organized Missions, secession from the Synagogue did occasionally take place. We might mention several most eminent men, who, by the simple reading of the Scriptures and conversation with pious Christians, were led to the knowledge of the Saviour, and faith in His precious blood. They constituted that ever-existing ‘remnant according to the election of grace’—the palpable pledge that ‘God hath not cast away His people.’ But these conversions, the first-fruits of a future and more abundant harvest, were, comparatively speaking, very few. Since then the reverse has been the case; accessions to the Church have been rapidly increasing. In Protestant countries like Germany and England, where the efforts of missionaries have been more concentrated, baptisms can be counted by hundreds, and even thousands. In the Chapel of the London Jews’ Society in Palestine-place alone, nearly fourteen hundred adults and children are inscribed on the baptismal register. In Berlin and some other German cities, which have always been great centres of attraction to Jews, the efforts for their spiritual welfare have been crowned with a success, the most sanguine could scarcely have anticipated. In the absence of accurate official statistics, which it is very difficult to obtain, we cannot, as in heathen lands, where converts occupy distinct settlements, tabulate the proselytes and the localities where they reside; the aggregate is, however, very considerable. According to the most authentic information, there are in the present day above twenty thousand Jews, who by baptism have been received into the fold of Christ; and, were we to include those who are Israelites by descent, the number might be doubled, if not tripled.

“But it is alleged, particularly by unbelieving Jews, that the majority of converts are men of low origin, illiterate, and of vicious lives. This charge is not new. The Pharisees in times of old exclaimed, ‘Have any of the rulers believed in Him?’ And one of the most notorious heathen opponents the primitive Church had to encounter, made use of similar unworthy taunts in his attack upon the Gospel. Now, if we admit that the statement is true, and not the invention of insidious malice, which seeks to misrepresent every good work in order to further its own ungodly designs, what does it matter? Are the vicious not to be reclaimed? Are the degraded not to be raised? If it is wrong to snatch the vile and base from the gates of death, and prepare them to associate with the pure and holy, we glory in the offence. The sick need the physician. Our Lord Himself came to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance. His message of mercy is not the monopoly of the decent and prosperous—it is as free as the air we breathe, and the sky on which we gaze. No one is excluded from sharing in heaven’s universal amnesty. It imposes no conditions, and exacts no con-

cessions, but simply bids man repent and be reconciled to God. Our slanderers should be grateful, that we drain their community of the vile and base, and make them virtuous and good. We know Jews, who, before their conversion, rioted in every pollution and sin. Judaism, impotent and lifeless as it is, could not reform their characters and eradicate the evil passions, that had taken hold of their hearts. On high festivals and the Day of Atonement, they went for a few hours to the Synagogue, repeated a certain number of prayers, perhaps also gave a donation to the poor, and away again they hurried to the haunts of dissipation, in the vague persuasion that their old sins were wiped out, and that they could now cast up a new account before another twelve months had completed their circuit. The Gospel revealed to them the purity of God, the equity of His government, and the merciful design of His law. Sin was now no longer regarded as a harmless infirmity, which Divine justice would never punish, but as a crime, which the interposition of the Divine Redeemer alone could expiate. These solemn truths startled them from their complacent security, and made repentance and faith, purity and holiness, an imperious necessity of the soul.

“But it is merely an artful device of our adversaries to represent converts as men of doubtful morals and uncultivated minds. They resort to such insinuations from motives, that are obvious enough. We admit that we reject no one, who wants to be instructed. We receive all, that we may improve all. But it is a well-known fact, that the ignorant and unlettered, are invariably most hostile to the missionaries. Coarse and fanatical, or extremely loose and irreligious, they prefer a few unedifying rites, that appeal to the senses, to the spiritual truths of the Gospel, that impose a check upon the sinful affections of the heart. It is far easier for them to put on phylacteries, and to kiss the scroll of the law, than to rise to a new life of faith in Christ Jesus. Of course we do not, like the Rabbis, look upon ignorant men as if they were out of the pale of humanity; on the contrary, we gladly welcome them to our Bible-class, prayer-meetings, and even, where it is necessary, we teach them to read in the language, in which they were born, the wonderful things contained in God’s Word; but, as a rule, their religious opinions are too much swayed either by superstition or unbelief to make them heed the warnings or entreaties of the missionary. Our proselytes, if not all, yet the great majority, belong to the intelligent and learned class. Were it desirable, we might give a long list of Hebrew Christians distinguished for eminent piety, extensive usefulness, and superior literary attainments. We, however, forbear to do so. Their names are dear to the Church, and will be remembered with reverence and love, when their detractors are altogether forgotten.

“Unwilling as we feel to linger any longer on these unpleasant topics, consideration for our Hebrew-Christian brethren compels us



most emphatically to repudiate the oft-reiterated charge, that converts constitute the refuse of the Jewish community. The Jews know well enough that this is not true. But what are they to do? Shall they own the power of the Gospel, and attribute the numerous conversions to His saving influence? Shall they render justice to these men, and acknowledge that their defection from the Synagogue was prompted by the holiest of motives? No, such a confession would be an indirect homage to the divinity of the Christian faith. In the absence of more violent methods of revenge, malice must be invoked to vindicate the violated sanctity of the synagogue creed. It is a two-edged sword. It injures the character of the proselytes, and casts discredit upon the work of the missionaries. Unfortunately, many Christians, and even professing friends of Israel, credit these calumnies. But is there even a shadow of truth in the statement so persistently advanced? We need not travel very far to prove our assertion. It is said that the United Kingdom contains about 60,000 Jews. We believe that 100,000 would be more correct. They form a most heterogeneous mixture. All countries in the world are represented by them. Learning and intellectual culture, unlike that among their co-religionists in Germany, were never the objects of their ambition. The Exchange, the warehouse, and the shop engaged their talents, and secured them wealth and influence. Now, it is computed, that there are about 3,000 Christian Israelites in the Metropolis and the Provinces. Many had to sustain a hard conflict, and not a few, too, were exposed to anguish and trouble that would, if published, throw into shade the most pathetic story of the sensational novel writer. But in spite of the overwhelming difficulties, that drew a dark shadow over their temporal prospects, they succeeded in winning by industry and perseverance their way to most distinguished positions. Christian Israelites are to be found in Parliament, in the Courts of Law, and among the members of every learned profession. In the Church of England more than 100 Hebrew-Christian clergymen faithfully proclaim the Gospel, which once they hated and despised. Foreign and Home Missions have also a fair number of Hebrew believers, who, having themselves experienced what it is to be plucked as brands from the burning, seek to snatch others from the same devouring flame. We readily admit that all have not been brought to the knowledge of Christ through the instrumentality of missionaries. Many, perhaps, never saw nor spoke to a missionary. They may have heard of his existence, listened to the comments and reflections made upon his work, or accidentally glanced over a tract or book he circulated. These accidents, which in all probability they attribute to chance, under an All-wise Providence, proved the indirect means that excited their inquiry, and led them to the knowledge of Him, whom to know is life everlasting. Thus, we believe, that many whom we shall never know in this world, will yet be our joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“But, before we enter into details, it may be useful to make a few prefatory remarks to explain the difficulties and obstacles we have to encounter. The Jews in England, as it is well known to those acquainted with them, constitute quite an eclectic community. They come from all lands; and, in their views and sentiments, reflect the intellectual, moral, and religious state of the different nations among whom they dwelt. The majority are natives of those great Jewish centres, Poland and Russia. Every year, from one thousand to fifteen hundred, quit the dominions of the Czar for these free and friendly shores. Germany and the East, also contribute their quota, to swell the Jewish population of Great Britain. In the absence of reliable denominational statistics, it is impossible to give the exact number of Jews within the British realms; but we believe that the total is above, rather than below, one hundred thousand souls. About seventy thousand, if not more, reside in the Metropolis. In some parishes, such as Spitalfields, Mile End, Stepney, and certain parts of Whitechapel, they form a considerable proportion of the inhabitants. But the East is not the only part where they congregate. The fashionable West and North-west also have a fair percentage, nor are the North and North-east entirely eschewed by them. Many are very wealthy, but the great majority are poor, and not a few miserably destitute. Their prosperous co-religionists, although charitable and even generous, are exceedingly haughty and proud. The rabbinical adage, ‘All Israelites are one,’ is only exemplified when anything occurs that offends the national honour, prejudice, or interest. Towards missionaries they are as much opposed, as were their fanatical forefathers; and no misrepresentation is thought unbecoming, that can possibly tend to bring into disrepute the work in which they are engaged. Their opposition, happily, does not retard it; on the contrary, it excites attention and enlists inquiry. We ourselves have, during the last twelve months, had many proofs that such is the case. At no former period, since our residence in the Metropolis, have we come in contact with so many and such different classes of Jews. On several occasions our house had quite the appearance of a place of public resort. Our visitors represented almost every nationality, and form of belief and unbelief. The Paris Exhibition, which brought a large number of foreign Jews to London, no doubt contributed to swell the extraordinary number of our visitors. All who called, were not actuated by a desire to discuss religious questions; but, whatever the motive may have been, the great truths of the Gospel invariably formed the chief topic of our conversation. The impression produced will not, we trust, prove evanescent in every instance.

“Besides a miscellaneous class of callers, we have also had many visits from men and women, who evidently cherished a kind of vague idea that Christianity could give them that comfort and peace which Judaism was not able to afford. Out of that number, sixty-six were admitted into the Wanderers’ Home, and, for a period,

varying from two to ten months, participated in the means of grace enjoyed in a Christian household, whilst nearly as many were provided with lodgings in the neighbourhood. The applications for baptism exceeded those of any former year, but it was not deemed advisable to accede to the request, in cases where any suspicion existed, that the desire was prompted only by a conviction of the truth, and not by any heartfelt experience of its converting and saving power. Several of the candidates still continue to attend our Bible-class, and we prayerfully hope that, in the course of the year, grace may be given them to make a good confession of their faith in Christ crucified. From among the many catechumens who, since last December, earnestly solicited the ordinance of baptism, twenty-two had their wish granted. They were all thoroughly prepared for that rite, and our fervent prayer is that He, who 'has begun a good work in them, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'

"The social position, which these men and women occupied among their own people, though not very high, was most respectable. Two are the sons of money-changers and bankers; one of a rabbi; two of landowners; four of merchants; one was a broker; one a small shopkeeper, and the rest were either comfortable tradespeople, or worked as tailors, dyers, and jewellers. In becoming Christians, they all had to make some sacrifice for Christ and the Gospel. It was not poverty that brought them to the truth, but love for the truth that reduced them to poverty. We mention this, because the question is often asked: 'Why is it that the majority of proselytes, notwithstanding their superior education, are generally poor?' The answer simply is, that 'They have obeyed the Saviour's command, and left all to follow Him.' That this is an incontrovertible fact, no one acquainted with our proselytes will dispute. Jews, it is generally admitted, are most violently prejudiced against the Gospel. We will not dilate on the causes which have produced this feeling. The rabbis, by misrepresenting the doctrines of Christianity, have, no doubt, contributed to a very great extent to produce it; but the Church is not blameless. Now in Austria, Poland, Russia, Syria, and even in some parts of Germany, a Jew, who is convinced that Jesus is the Christ, naturally enough shrinks from taking a step which would certainly entail social ostracism, domestic persecution, if not imprisonment, and the ruin of every prospect in life. Anxious to avow his convictions, and yet afraid of the consequences that are sure to ensue, the poor man resolves to quit the home where his sentiments will not be tolerated, for the land where he knows he can, without let or hindrance, worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. The lower class of English Jews are not only difficult to reach, but they are hardened to every serious and salutary impression. Most of them are either ignorant and fanatical, or coarse and irreligious. Of course, there are happy exceptions, but they are few and far between. We ourselves have baptized some, who are living monuments of the power

of the Gospel. Indeed, our converts form quite a representative body. They come from all climes, and speak almost every tongue. They are generally well educated, and some are even profound and erudite scholars."

"During the past year, upwards of two hundred and fifty attended for various periods the daily instruction. It was something quite unusual, to see the Mission Room filled every morning with men of different ages—some in the vigour of manhood, and others on the verge of the grave—who all expressed an anxious desire to inquire into the truths of Christianity. Of that number, more than a hundred were admitted into the Home, or provided with lodgings in the neighbourhood. Among that class, were rabbis, teachers, students of universities, clerks, mechanics, and pedlars. They represented almost every nationality. Most of them came from Poland, Russia, Hungary, and Roumania, whilst but a small proportion were from Turkey, Persia, and Africa. To meet the difficulties, which the diversity of languages presented, we were obliged to form two Bible-classes, in one of which instruction was given in German, and in the other in Hebrew. As might be expected, all, who attended, were not prompted by the purest motives; but, whatever the object may have been that induced them to come, they were received with Christian kindness, and taught the love of God in Christ, in the prayerful hope, that some gleams of light might shine into their benighted hearts, and, in due time, bring them as true penitents to the Cross of Calvary. And our expectations are not always disappointed. The bread cast upon the waters is often found after many days. Some years ago we had a young man in our Home, who gave us a good deal of trouble. To our great satisfaction he took his departure. We doubted whether any serious impression had been made upon him. That very man is at present a zealous and successful preacher of that Gospel, which he once despised. Every Sunday he has crowded congregations, who value and appreciate his ministry. Another, who appeared almost impervious to every religious influence, was, after the lapse of several anxious months, touched by the Spirit of God, and became a renewed and converted man. He is at present the pastor of a village congregation, and is beloved by all the members of his flock. The last, to whom we will briefly allude, heard the tidings of salvation in Jerusalem. Being afraid of his bigoted relations and friends, he quitted Palestine and made his way to this country. Like most inquirers, who come to London, he directed his steps to the Wanderers' Home. Being almost destitute, we could not refuse his request for admission. He was fully convinced of the errors of Judaism, but had no clear idea of the truths of Christianity. Being of a grave disposition, his spiritual conflicts rendered him miserable and wretched. At last the clouds, which had obscured his mental vision, were dispelled; and he could truly say, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' He is at present, an earnest and universally beloved evangelist in the Holy City."



It is now desirable, that particular instances should be given of the direct blessing which had been given by God to this interesting and important work. In doing so, it is necessary to state, that these form but a few out of the many, whose "record is on high." The condition in which these sons and daughters of Abraham had lived, and the nature of the testimony which they had been enabled to give, have already been indicated in the words of the Missionary. These have been the Lord's "witnesses"—the evidence that the remnant, according to the election of grace, is being thus gathered in, year by year, in increasing numbers. It is in itself an evidence, that they are beginning to remember the Lord, in the lands of their dispersion.

"About eighteen months ago, a gentlemanly-looking Jew came to my house. His language, dress and deportment, indicated that he belonged to the upper class of his people. After a few cursory remarks, he said: 'Mr. Stern, you may not be acquainted with my name. I come from Austria. The missionary promised to write to you on my behalf, and I presume he has done so. I have left a comfortable home, and a position in my father's office, which assured me the brightest prospects in life, for no other cause, than an irresistible desire to secure my soul's eternal welfare. Judaism, whether of the Rabbinists or modern reformers, is not, I am fully persuaded, in harmony with God's Word; and if Christianity is not Divine, truth is perished out of the earth. This can never be the case. The Almighty has not left us to be the sport of chance, and then to plunge into eternal darkness. No; He has given us the Bible, and in that Bible I know He has taught us not only that man is a sinner, but also that there is a Saviour. I am anxious, however, to be instructed, and I hope you will accept me as one of your catechumens.' I could not resist that appeal, and so at once admitted him into the Home. His father, who is a banker and money-changer at L——, as well as his brother, a rising physician, when they heard where he was, repeatedly urged him to return to his family; but to all their entreaties his reply invariably was, 'If I should die of starvation in the streets of London, I will not trifle with my soul's final welfare.' Unfortunately, his hasty temper and unconquerable pride, often made me question whether, despite the many sacrifices he had made for conscience sake, his temper and disposition would not hinder him from ever obtaining an experimental knowledge of the Gospel. After many hard and severe conflicts, that light which lighteth every one that seeks the truth, shone into his heart, subdued its passions, and filled it with the graces of the Spirit. I now no longer refused to accede to his reiterated request to be received into the Church of Christ, and I have every



reason to believe that, with help from above, he will continue a steadfast and exemplary Christian Israelite.

"The next case to which we would advert is one of peculiar interest, as it forcibly demonstrates that no system of philosophy, however elaborate and intellectual it may be, can appease the yearning of the soul, conscious of its high destiny and utter helplessness. This was the experience of S——, as it is also that of many other serious and thoughtful Israelites. Born in one of those beautifully-situated towns in Hungary, and in the very lap of luxury, he, from his infancy, enjoyed all the advantages which wealth invariably bestows. At the usual age, his parents took every care to place him under competent teachers, and subsequently they sent him to a well-known commercial school at Vienna. When his education was finished, his father took him into his own business. The thoroughly secular education which he had received, naturally disposed him to regard all creeds with indifference, if not aversion. The Word of God he had of course never read, nor did he care to do so—it was too old-fashioned a book for an enlightened Jew; the writings of modern philosophers had far greater attractions. They were the subject of discussion in good society, and in harmony with the progress of an intellectual age. To use his own words, he was a confirmed infidel. Two years ago he visited the United States, and, on his return, stayed a few weeks in England. Here, quite accidentally, a New Testament came into his hands. At first he regarded it as a book of fables, and intended to throw it aside, but, as he read page after page, it aroused his attention and also interested him. He was, however, too hardened a freethinker to care for the invitations of mercy, and the denunciations of wrath it contains. Still he was not happy; a dread of the 'unknown' oppressed him. Once more he had recourse to the effusions of the atheistic school; it was a vain effort to seek for life and light in the cheerless theories of philosophers, who only speculate on eternal death and darkness. But where should he gain that knowledge which would give certitude to doubts, hope to fear, and faith to unbelief? With the Synagogue he had done for ever, and the doctrines of the Church he did not understand. In his perplexity, he again betook himself to the New Testament, and, to his delight, that which before he had regarded as a sublime system of ethics, he now discovered was in reality a dazzling exhibition of Divine wisdom and love. It was at this very time, that his family most pressingly urged him to hasten his return home. This he felt was quite impossible; he could not go back to those near and dear to him and conceal his Christian convictions. It might ensure him some property, but would it not be an imitation of the reprobated conduct of him who only asked to go home and bury his father? Prompted by these considerations, he determined to leave all and follow Christ. It was at this critical period of his life that I became acquainted with him. The appearance, language, and gentlemanly deportment of

the man impressed me most favourably; but what could I do for him? He had no situation, and extensive tours had almost drained his resources; true, the Wanderers' Home might offer him a shelter, but then I did not consider it a place adapted for one who had always been accustomed to an easy, independent, and luxurious life. I mentioned my scruples to him, but he assured me that he was quite willing to submit to any discipline that I might deem necessary, to test his sincerity and uprightness. The candour with which he spoke, overcame my fears, and, without further hesitation, I yielded to his request. My expectations were not disappointed; his conduct was in every respect most exemplary. Morning, noon, and night he pored over the pages of God's Word. These studies were greatly blessed to him; God no longer appeared to him as a mere abstract idea, but as an all-wise and all-merciful Father, who is ever with His people, sanctifying their hearts, inflaming their love, and fortifying their faith. He had indeed experienced a great change; and now, after many trying and painful conflicts, he could exclaim, 'I believe, and am happy.' Some weeks before his baptism he wrote to me: 'How little does Christ require of us, and yet how great, infinitely great, did the simple word 'believe' appear to me last year. But 'old things have passed away,' and now, in the words of the Ethiopian, I also say, 'What doth hinder me to be baptized?' His ardent wish was at length gratified, and I cherish an unfeigned hope that 'He who hath begun a good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'

"A native of Bohemia, came one day to my Bible-class. He was prompted to do so partly by curiosity and partly by a desire to know what Christians really believe. That the 'Goyim,' or Gentiles of Bohemia, were idolaters, he had no doubt, but he could not think that such a clever and intellectual people as the English, nor the great number of Jews who had embraced their faith, could possibly bow the knee and worship crosses, pictures, images, and other idolatrous emblems. The service of our Church, the prayer and exposition of God's Word in the Home, convinced him that our creed was very different from that of the people of his own native country. This attracted him to the Bible-class whenever time permitted. Being, as I was told, a careless, wild, and unsatisfactory character, I spoke to him several times about the ruinous course he was pursuing. It did not appear that my words made any impression on him. One day, however, after the Bible-class was over, he requested to have a private conversation. A favour of this kind, which is never refused to anyone, was readily granted. When we were alone, he said, without the least preface, 'Dr. Stern, I want to become a Christian.' My reply was, 'I cannot make you one. God alone can do that, and if you pray to Him for His Holy Spirit He will hear your petition, and impart to you that Divine gift which can purify your heart, and make you a true and sincere follower of Christ.' Some days later, in answer to a question I put to him, in

the course of the usual catechetical instruction, he said, with evident emotion, 'I am not like some here, versed either in the Bible or Talmud, but I know that Jesus suffered and died for my sins.' The tremulous tones, with which these words were uttered, convinced me that a work of grace had begun in his soul, and, as he had frequently implored me to admit him into the Home, if only for a short period, I at last yielded to his request. For some time his conduct was most exemplary. Unfortunately it did not last long. His unruly and ungovernable temper again and again broke forth, so that at length I had to dismiss him. I was sorry for the poor fellow, but there was no alternative. As I knew that he would not find work among the Jews, whose hostility he had incurred, I gave him some pecuniary assistance, so that he should not be exposed to immediate want. On his leaving I reminded him of the solemn truths he had heard in the Home, and urged him not to forget them. He took his departure with an air of assumed indifference, as if nothing had happened to cause him even a transient regret. I hardly ever expected to see him again, but, to my agreeable surprise such was not the case. The Holy Spirit was striving within him, and notwithstanding obstinate resistance he was involuntary induced to exclaim, 'Teach me thy way, O Lord. I will walk in Thy truth; make my heart to fear Thy name.' And now once more, after the lapse of some months, he came to the Bible-class. His appearance bore traces of hardships and privations. He might have obtained employment among the Jews had he consented to work on Sundays, but this he was determined not to do. By dint of perseverance, however, he succeeded in finding a place in the business of a Christian, who did not mind his broken and imperfect English. It was now impossible for him to come regularly for instruction, but, whenever leisure permitted, he was in his place. The light of Divine truth, which had illumined his mind and humbled his heart, also made him anxious to realize that his sins were blotted out, and that he was accepted in the Beloved. This caused him to be careful not to yield to his hasty temper nor to rest satisfied with a mere outward change, without a true and genuine inward conversion. I knew that he wanted to make a public profession of his faith, but I invariably refused to discuss that question with him. Repeatedly he inquired, 'When are you going to baptize me?' And the reply he always received was, 'When I feel certain that, in frame and feeling, you are rooted and grounded in the faith once delivered to the saints.' The yearned-for day at length arrived, and he was, to his infinite delight, received into the Church by the sacrament of baptism. He is, I am happy to add, walking in every respect consistently with his Christian profession.

"A native of Jassy, went some years ago, like many other pious Jews, on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Being a 'Chasid,' or strict Pharisee, his heart was wrung with anguish when he saw a considerable number of respectable Israelites there, who had committed the

unpardonable sin, of apostatizing from the God of their fathers. To behold such a sight in the Holy City was to him an inexpressible grief. 'No wonder,' he mentally ejaculated, 'that the Messiah does not come. No wonder that our captivity has not yet been turned.' Reflections like these haunted him by day and night. He inquired whether these heretics, could not be reclaimed, and the answer he invariably received was, 'No human power can persuade them of the error of their ways. They are infatuated with their belief, and those, who try to bring them back to the synagogue, are often won by their arguments to the Church to which they belong.' Pity and compassion for their lost condition, moved him to make an effort to restore these straying sheep to the fold which they had deserted. To his surprise he found that the men, whom he had commiserated as impious apostates, were devout believers in the Bible. It is true they held that Jesus is the Messiah, and worshipped Him as the *Jehovah Zidkenu*, the Lord our Righteousness; but did not the Talmud and other learned Jewish writings maintain that God Himself was the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel? All this excited his interest, and he could not rest until he had procured some of the books and tracts circulated by the missionaries. With great eagerness he devoured their contents. The warnings of his friends were to be verified, and the bigoted Jew, who sought to turn others from truth to error, was himself to be turned from error to truth. The secret soon oozed out, and he had to leave Jerusalem in order to escape persecution and maltreatment from his friends. With the utmost candour, he told me that he was not a Christian, but that he was most anxiously concerned about his soul's eternal welfare. As his sincerity was beyond all doubt, I granted his request for admission into the Home. Here, however, he was far from happy. He read the Bible, attended the daily instruction, and what proved a comfort to others only troubled and distressed him. Gladly would he have said with the blind man at Jerusalem, 'One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.' But, to his regret, he was unable to do so. The anguish and misery he endured made life itself a burden. At length, persevering prayer for light and guidance received a response, which filled him with gratitude and praise, and he realized the truth of the Apostle's exclamation that God is indeed 'a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' His growth in grace and in the experimental knowledge of Christ was henceforth most rapid and striking. The night of doubt and fear had passed away, and the day of light and love dawned upon his benighted soul. No longer did his reason rebel against the Divine plan of salvation. The Spirit of God had taught him his helplessness, and joyfully did he accept the offer of pardon and forgiveness through a suffering Messiah. May He, who has called him to the knowledge of the truth, preserve him blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Nearly two years ago, a youth of about eighteen, but who looked



more like a lad of fourteen, applied to me for instruction and admission into the Home. He told me that he had been a waiter in an hotel at Berlin, and, as this class of young men to a great extent have no religion, I hesitated to comply with his request. I, however, invited him to attend my Bible-class. This he cheerfully did. Every morning at nine o'clock he was in his place around the table. Pleased with his regularity and attention, I at length received him as an inmate. He possessed some knowledge of Hebrew, but beyond that, his education had been sadly neglected. Being docile and anxious to improve his mind, I sent him to the Middle-class-school, Cowper-street, City-road. Here he made very good progress in English and other branches of elementary training. His desire for secular knowledge did not, I was glad to observe, indispose him to the study of God's Word. Gradually he became conscious of sin and the need of a Saviour. Having found this treasure, he sought in the exuberance of his joy to share with others, and particularly with his father and sisters, the happiness he himself felt. The tidings he communicated did not touch a responsive chord in their hearts. His father wrote to him a few weeks later, 'I am amazed and surprised to hear that you have become a Meshumed, (apostate). Is it possible? Has the son, whom I cherished and loved, departed from his God? Did your mother, of blessed memory, teach you such lessons? I suppose you got this wicked idea in your head at Berlin, and then you went to England to carry it out. All ungodly Jews do so. Alas, that it should be the case. Our pious and learned men should hinder their friends and relations from visiting that country; they only go there to be baptized. Already I had hoped that you would come home, marry, and with my assistance, become a respectable member of our community. I was not to experience that happiness. Intelligence of your death would have afflicted and pained me, but intelligence of your apostasy has caused me sorrow, which only your return to the God of Israel can alleviate. Write to me immediately, and without any reserve tell me, what induced you to take such a step.' The answer, of which he gave me the copy after it had been despatched, was most touching. He assured his father that he would not, were his life pending on it, cause him any grief. It was a serious matter for a son to renounce the religion of his parents, relations and friends. He felt the awful consequences that step involved, and never would he have taken it had not the Scripture, conscience, and his soul's everlasting happiness prompted him to do so. Were he to consult his temporal interest, he would abjure Christ, and rush with open eyes to a fearful doom. This, however, he would never do, had he even to beg his bread in the streets. If his father thought he had departed from the God of Israel, he would entreat him calmly, and without prejudice or passion, to examine the passages of Scripture to which he ventured to refer, in order to prove that he was not an idolater, but a firm believer in Him whom David called 'my Strength and my



Redeemer.' Unable to shake his son's constancy and trust in the Saviour, the old man has tried, through friends in London, to persuade him to return to his home and family, where, notwithstanding his Christian belief, he would meet with a kind and cordial reception. Hitherto they have not succeeded, and I trust they never will succeed. The Saviour, who guided him to His footstool, and to whom in his baptism a few months ago he dedicated himself, will sustain him by His grace and Spirit in every trial of his faith. He has left school, and is at present in a situation, where his industry and deportment appear to give great satisfaction.

"The 'Chasidim,' or pietists, form a large and fanatical section of rabbinical Jews. Some of their religious rites resemble more the ravings of maniacs than the worship of sane men. They abound in Russia, Austria, Hungary, Roumania, and some parts of Turkey. Though implicit followers of the traditions of the Synagogue, they mistakenly seek to approach the divine life by exercises that contradict the ascetic habits they profess to practise. Upwards of twenty months ago, a man, about thirty-two years of age, belonging to that sect, called upon me. We conversed together upon the person, the work, and the glory, as well as the extent of the Messiah's kingdom. He listened most attentively for some time, and then, quite unexpectedly, in a manner that startled me, exclaimed, 'I had a presentiment that you would solve some of the enigmas, which for a long time have perplexed me.' Upon further inquiry I learnt, that, for several years, he had been secretly reading the New Testament in order to ascertain whether Jesus was the Christ. Like most Jews, when they begin to investigate the truths of the Gospel, he sought more for evidences of its veracity than for a personal application of its soul-saving doctrines. However, before we parted, he admitted that I had convinced him that Jesus was the Messiah of the prophecies. He repeated his visits, and also read the books I lent him. The great Light, which, whosoever followeth shall not walk in darkness, shone into his heart, dissipating the moral and spiritual night, in which he had hitherto been enveloped, by revealing to him the eternal Son of God as the only hope and refuge of sinners. His father, who resides in Hungary, and is a man of considerable estate, heard from friends and countrymen of his son's intercourse with the missionary. This made the aged Chasid very anxious for his return. He sent him some money, and promised him a further remittance of a hundred pounds if, without delay, he left England. To this he would not consent. Then the questions naturally arose, What should he do? With whom could he reside? And where would he find the means of subsistence? I relieved him of all his fears and troubles by admitting him into the Home. Here, in the midst of a number of pious inquirers, his Christian character was strikingly developed. He no longer cared for evidences of the truth; the Holy Spirit had imparted to him an internal testimony which, more than all instruc-

tion and argument, convinced him that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Henceforth the pious Jew grew into a sincere Christian, and the implicit devotee of Chasidism into a humble and faithful follower of Jesus. In conformity with his earnest request I baptized him; fully persuaded that He, who has called him to a knowledge of His Son, will also enable him to glorify His holy name by a walk worthy of his Christian profession.

"A native of Hungary, had, like most Israelites who have received a liberal education, thrown aside all the restraints of religion and adopted the fashionable unbelief of the day. In the University where he studied, the irreligious sentiments, which he had espoused, were highly popular. Being an excellent Hungarian scholar and a poet of no mean ability, his society was eagerly sought by all Magyar patriots. Admired and flattered by the youthful nobles, who would in future years control the destinies of his country, the young Jew had a fair prospect of a successful career. In his miscellaneous reading he one day lighted upon a good Christian book, which greatly interested him. It contained solemn warnings to the careless and impenitent. He tried to divert his mind from the contemplation of such topics, by plunging more deeply into the vortex of dissipation, but an accusing voice from within marred all his pleasure. 'If a religious book can disturb my peace,' he mentally ejaculated, 'let me try and see what the Bible will effect.' He bought a copy, and, being a man of decision, he did not rest until he had carefully perused its contents. Of course his object was to find faults; but, to his surprise and comfort, it arrested his attention, and taught him to know and to worship the God of truth. The change, which his newly-acquired convictions produced in him, did not escape the notice of his friends. At first they were inclined to attribute it to some disappointment; but, when they discovered the real cause, they began to hate and despise him. The Jewish professors and students were especially indignant, and no means were spared to bring about his expulsion from the University. A political fracas of the students, with which he had nothing to do, afforded the longed-for opportunity. He was rusticated, and ordered to quit the town, until the charges alleged against him were thoroughly sifted. Conscious that his innocence would soon be established, he determined to visit England during the interval. Here I became acquainted with him. The poor man was quite delighted to meet some one in the city of London, who was willing to befriend him. From a conversation I had with him I could see that his knowledge of the Gospel was still very superficial. I invited him to my Bible-class, which he readily attended. Unfortunately, his finances, which at no time had been in a flourishing condition, the journey, and a few weeks' residence in London had grievously reduced. No money, and no friends able to assist him, the man would have sunk into utter despair had I not offered him a shelter in the Wanderers' Home. Transplanted into the salutary atmos-

phere of a Christian household, and in the midst of men, who had all realized more or less the power of the Gospel, the truth he had hitherto but vaguely understood took hold upon his affections, and, under the Spirit's influence, renewed, quickened, and sanctified him. He had now been in the Home three months, and, during the whole of that period, the friend, who had promised to watch the investigation of his case, did not write him a single line. This sadly troubled and distressed him. One morning, however, the longed-for communication arrived. The matter had been carefully examined into, and he was declared innocent. Anxious once more to resume his interrupted studies, he resolved to return to the Continent without delay. The only thing that could have detained him, was the administration of the rite of baptism. As I had had many signal proofs that he was a truly converted man, I acceded to his request, and, on Sunday, March 27th, he was, together with three other pious catechumens, publicly received into the covenant of grace. Full of peace, joy, and gratitude, he quitted the Home, which had been to him a true Beth-El, and retraced his steps back to his University. The sufferings and hardships, to which he had been unjustly exposed, although a gracious God had overruled all for good, instead of subduing the malice of his former friends, imparted to it greater virulence. His unbelieving Jewish brethren, who had heard of his baptism, were most relentless in their hostility. 'Apostate,' 'renegade,' were the epithets applied to him by these modern Freethinkers. Some of the Professors, who were kindly disposed towards him, advised him to go to another University, where his religious convictions would not expose him to perpetual annoyances and vexations. As a proof of their sympathy they collected a handsome sum, with which they presented him in order to meet his immediate expenses. The poor man reluctantly quitted his native place and the University he loved so well, but there was no alternative. I hope, however, that he will not give up a pursuit for which he seems to possess special talents. What an illusion is modern liberalism and tolerance ! ”

The mere desire to be baptized is never recognized by the Missionaries as a ground on which this ordinance should be administered. An illustration of this is about to be given. Nor does it suffice, that the catechumens should exhibit an intelligent acquaintance with revealed Truth. The Teachers always look primarily for the evidence, that the Truth had been received into the heart of the inquirer. It has sometimes been argued, that this rigidity of purpose is at variance with the usage of the Apostles, who baptized persons on the mere profession of faith, even without an intermediate training as catechumens. But every experienced Missionary is aware, that to err in the observance of unnecessary caution in

this respect, is an error on the right side. One case of apostacy would be paraded by the enemies of Christianity before the world, and would be productive of more mischief, than the salutary effect produced by the consistent lives of hundreds, who hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering.

“Recently a Jewish gentleman of superior intellectual attainments and culture called upon me. After a few preliminary remarks, my visitor, whose name, for obvious reasons, I cannot give, informed me that he was the friend of the reigning Prince of —, and, although not officially, yet virtually, his Finance Minister. Some pecuniary business, which years before he had transacted for the Prince, brought him under his favourable notice. He was then residing at Breslau, and, though a Jew by birth, had seceded from the Synagogue, and joined the section officially designated ‘*Confessionslos*,’ without any belief. Prosperous in his undertakings, and surrounded by an amiable and loving family, he still felt unhappy. Life without a future appeared to him a sad anomaly. He endeavoured to divert his mind from such distracting subjects by reading treatises on metaphysics by well-known rationalistic writers. But they did not satisfy him. At last he betook himself to the Bible and to the works of celebrated divines. These studies, which his wife encouraged, dissipated the fears and doubts which had for a long time troubled him. Persuaded that the God of Scripture was the God of Redemption, he was anxious to avail himself of his visit to England to be admitted by baptism into the English Episcopal Church. This favour he thought I could not possibly refuse, particularly as he had no objection to bestow a liberal gift upon any charitable institution, in which I was interested. To his regret, I could not accede to his request, as his views of the doctrines of the Gospel were far too vague and confused. I offered to instruct him, but, as his time was limited, he thought he could easily be received into one of the churches on the Continent, where he fancied the clergy were not so strict and precise.

“H. B. was at one time an inmate of the Wanderers’ Home. He appeared to be an honest, upright inquirer. The study of the Bible, and notes on striking texts, were his happiest occupations. But, with all this outward fervour for divine things, we discovered that he was destitute of every inward spiritual grace. We informed him that the Home was not a place suited for men who cherished his views and sentiments. He acknowledged the justice of our intimation, and took his departure. What he had learnt in the Home had, however, produced an impression which he could not obliterate. He tried to forget it, but the effort did not succeed. Haunted by fears and alarmed by an accusing conscience, he despairingly exclaimed, ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’ The inquiry was blessed to his soul. It brought him to a knowledge of his guilt and

the dying love of the Redeemer. In his mental distress he once more bent his steps towards the Home. With tears streaming down his cheeks, he expressed deep contrition for his former indifference to the solemn lessons he had been taught. 'God,' to use his own words, 'has had pity on me, and I shall never be able to praise him sufficiently for all He has done for my soul.' He had plenty of work, and now only desired to be prepared for baptism. It was quite affecting to see the poor man, once inflated with Jewish pride and self-conceit, now acknowledging himself a humble and contrite sinner, unworthy of the love and mercy God had shown him."

Our faithful Missionary was often reminded of the bitter trials through which he passed, when in his early years he resolved to forsake father, mother, and all who were dear to him, so that he might "win Christ and be found in Him." The history of a young convert is here introduced, as well as the letter of his afflicted but mistaken father.

"Our blessed Lord, in one of those touching conversations with His disciples, declares, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.' All must be renounced and forsaken, when brought into competition with the duty, homage, and service due to the Saviour. This is not easily done. It requires fervent love and strong faith, before any one can sacrifice every tie of sweet affection and cherished friendship to the dictates of religion and conscience. But He who enjoined the precept, knew also, that strength would be imparted to carry it into practice. Here is an instance. A. G. arrived in this country about eighteen months ago. He was induced to leave a comfortable home and a happy family circle by an intense desire to see the world. His father amply provided him with the means necessary for some months' sojourn in foreign lands. Being a pious Russian Jew, he shrank with horror from the idea of eating unlawful food, or living in an hotel kept by a Gentile. His religious scruples naturally brought him into contact only with his own people, and among these he heard language that shocked and appalled him. Not merely was the Talmud denounced as a system of superstition and folly; the Word of God, too, came in for a good share of wicked ridicule and blasphemous criticism. The remarks which he heard, though they jarred upon his ear, led him to reflect on the veracity and soundness of the creed in which he had hitherto reposed unquestioning trust. Now, it is an incontrovertible fact, that genuine Judaism, such as is taught by the rabbis, and accepted by all orthodox synagogues, can only thrive in the atmosphere of stagnation. It cannot maintain its claims where light and knowledge exert their faintest influence. This our inexperienced wanderer was not long in discovering. Happily, unlike the majority of Jews, he did not rush from one extreme to another,



and discard what was true because it contained an admixture of what was false. No ; religion was to him a subject far too serious to be treated with such culpable recklessness. But to whom should he apply for counsel and instruction ? In the rabbis, whether of the orthodox or reformed synagogue, he had no confidence. They either defended a decrepid system of tradition, or advocated modern theories of negation. It was at this critical period of his religious conflicts that I became acquainted with him. At my suggestion he diligently read the Bible, and also attended the daily instruction. Never having been to a Bible-class, he was not a little surprised and affected by what he witnessed. The prayer, the exposition, and the subdued solemnity of all, impressed him most favourably. But whilst he was every day gaining some fresh knowledge of the truth, which drew him nearer to the Saviour, his means of subsistence rapidly diminished. True, his father might send him a cheque if he still continued a pious Jew ; but as this was not the case, he justly hesitated in making the request. These and other circumstances, which it is not necessary to narrate, induced me to admit him into the Home. Here, relieved of all immediate anxieties, and surrounded by sympathizing, believing brethren, the last lingering shades of Jewish self-sufficiency and superstition, which till then had obscured the message of love and mercy, melted away, and the work of the Spirit began in his soul. He would now have been perfectly happy, had not the dread of his parents' grief and sorrow, should they hear of his conversion, perpetually haunted him. Every rap of the postman shook his whole frame. The dreaded letter at last arrived, and as its contents may interest our friends, we will translate it :—

‘ With an anguish-wrung heart and many tears, I write to you. Know, dearly-beloved son, that your grandfather has recently appeared to me in a dream, and distinctly said, ‘ Get up, for you will receive evil tidings.’ Instantly I arose from my bed, and walked up and down the room from midnight till day dawn. Exhausted and worn out, I again lay down to get some rest, but the dreaded vision hung over me like an incubus, and would not allow me to enjoy any repose. This happened several successive nights. Anxious not to distress your dear mother, I did not communicate to her the dangers I saw impending over our house ; but, to my inexpressible grief, I saw that she, too, was agitated by a painful secret, which she vainly tried to conceal. After many entreaties, she told me that she was distracted by dreams, which, as she narrated them, resembled in every respect those that tormented me. Three days elapsed, and then a man came from K., who brought us the intelligence of your apostacy. The news stunned us. We both fainted, and it took more than an hour to revive us. Much sympathy has been shown us by our friends and neighbours. I am now a little calmer, but your poor mother is sick and utterly desponding. My dear son, pity your grey-headed, aged father, and your despair-

ing, invalid mother, and write at once that all is misrepresentation and calumny. Banish evil thought out of your heart, and listen to the words of your father, who writes to you with tears, bitter tears, in his eyes. Oh, do not bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave! Other parents are happy in their children, and why should you make us miserable? Remember, my dear child, with what tenderness we nursed you in infancy; what care we bestowed upon you in your youth; and now, in vigour and manhood, when we hoped our son would be the light and joy of our eyes, will you forsake us, and the God whom we have taught you to worship? We implore, nay, we adjure you by all that is holy, that you abandon your evil ways. Repent! Repent! It will be well with you here and hereafter. Do not go on in your iniquity. If you are in want of money, we will help you. If you have debts, we will pay them; nay, I will, even in my old days, make a long journey and come to your rescue. Only cheer us, my dear son, with good tidings. I know you will not refuse our request. You will not listen to the suggestions of the Evil One. Should you, however, disappoint our fond hopes, and continue in your godless career, we ignore you as our son; we invoke the curse of Heaven upon you, and we blot out your name from our memory and hearts. That such a misfortune may not fall to our lot, is the prayer of your heavily-afflicted father,

‘H. G.’

“The answer he returned to this letter was affectionate and becoming a young Christian. He assured his parents that he loved them most tenderly; and that, far from disobeying their wishes, he would only be too happy to anticipate them, provided they did not violate his convictions, or oppose what he considered the dictates of God’s Word. His parents, however, were unrelenting. They would not hear of his protestations of filial love, nor admit that he was not a deluded apostate. Abjure your errors, or we discard you as our son, were the conditions they imposed. It was a trial that put his faith and constancy to a test he had hardly imagined. He must now either deny his Saviour, or sever the tie that bound him to his parents. But he did not falter in his decision. Cheerfully would he have yielded to the entreaties of his parents, had the matter merely involved temporal interests, but as it concerned his soul’s eternal welfare, he forsook all, and followed Christ.”

Among these—the ancient people of God—Mr. Stern laboured under a consciousness, that it was a work overflowing with privilege, as well as full of promise. Nor could he fail to witness to his Gentile readers, that it was through the excision of the branches of the good-olive tree, that they the branches of the wild-olive, had been grafted into the parent-stock of life and blessing. He wrote in this strain in one of his Reports.

“‘Their debtors they are.’ How startling an assertion! Rome a debtor to the Jews! Can it be that she who had subdued kingdoms, overthrown empires, and given laws to the universe, should be a debtor to a despised and fallen race? Impossible! Did she not wield an undisputable sway over countless nations and tribes, and by the very mention of her formidable legions strike terror into the heart of the brave, and is she to be told by a man of obscure name that she lies under obligations of the highest nature to the hated Jews? Such thoughts might have arisen in the mind of a Roman in the palace of the Cæsars, as he read the 11th chapter of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. And yet the statement of the Apostle, however obscure and unintelligible it might have appeared in times of yore, to a Gentile inquirer after the knowledge of the only true God, is a fact for ever fraught with mercy and love to every believer. Persecuted and oppressed, the scorn of the mighty and the scoff of the weak, the Jews have confessedly been a blessing to the world. Though the literature of Greece and Rome has no doubt tended to regulate the mind, to expand the intellect, and to cultivate the taste, yet all these beneficial influences of a heathen civilization sink into insignificance, when compared with that superior knowledge and higher wisdom communicated to mankind through the instrumentality of the Jews. The writings of their prophets are not the monopoly of the learned and educated, but a gift designed to make *all* ‘wise unto salvation.’ On the Thames and the Ganges, the Niger and the Rhine, among nations of every shade and colour, the books they indited are read and expounded, admired and revered as the Word of God, alike by the monarch on his throne, as by the humble labourer in his cottage-home.

“Now, if Paul could say to the Romans, who had no great knowledge of the Law, and were almost, if not altogether, unacquainted with the sublime and heaven-inspired poetry of the Prophets, ‘Their debtors they are,’ with what emphasis ought these words to thrill through the heart of every Christian believer! Words cannot describe, nor the tongue utter, the debt they owe. There is not a mercy nor a blessing which they value for themselves, their families, and the world at large, whether for time or eternity, which has not, under Divine providence, flowed to the Gentile through the medium of the Jew. And what has been the reciprocal acknowledgment? Centuries of oppression and unmitigated misery furnish the reply. The daughter of Zion, clad in weeds, sits desolate and forlorn on the highways of Christendom, breathing in vain the mournful language of the Prophet, ‘Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.’”

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### THE PREACHER. THE SPEAKER.

The Jews are well known for their linguistic attainments. They have for the most part remarkable aptitude in the acquisition of foreign languages, and a large proportion of them are equally distinguished by the purity of their accent. From an early period of his professional career, these qualities were distinctly noticeable in Mr. Stern. His vocabulary was copious, and he was singularly felicitous in the choice of suitable language in which to express his ideas. It was also at one time, often the subject of comment, how free he was from all the peculiarities of accent, which are generally indicative of persons of foreign birth. But after his return from the second journey to Abyssinia, this quality seemed to have deteriorated. Whether this proceeded from his prolonged stay among an Amharic-speaking people, or arose from some physical cause, it is impossible to say.

In his *extempore* addresses, his choice of words was almost as correct and vigorous, as it was in writing. As a PREACHER, he was always attractive, although there were great variations in the force and impressiveness which characterized some of his sermons. On the first occasion on which he occupied my own pulpit, his sermon, which was intended in a measure for Jewish hearers, failed to impress; but no one who heard him on his second visit, when he came for a similar purpose, will ever forget the masterly exposition which he gave of *Psalms xlv.*, and the true eloquence and power with which he testified of Christ.

There are but fragments of his sermons which exist. One preached at St. Matthew's Church, Newington, in April, 1873, on

Isaiah xi. 10, was taken down by a short-hand writer, and with some corrections, was afterwards, by request, published from the manuscript. A few extracts from this sermon, will sufficiently illustrate the character of his ministry.

“ We are sometimes told that the Christian religion is not designed to make man happy, cheerful and resigned. It is a melancholy and gloomy belief. All it breathes is, ‘Man is a miserable sinner.’ These remarks are suggested by a sermon a friend gave me last evening, and which was preached by one who formerly occupied the position of a parochial clergyman, but who is at present a well-known unbelieving lecturer. The discourse is based on the Hundredth Psalm, and has had an extensive circulation among the Jews. The preacher, in dilating on the goodness of God, unsparingly denounces what he is pleased to designate, the morose and cheerless belief of the Church. The arguments he advances in favour of his own views are so inconclusive, that they cannot possibly satisfy an inquiring mind. It is, and every Christian will admit it, delightful to meditate on God’s infinite love and compassion ; but, at the same time, we must not forget that it would be quite unreasonable to deprive God of those other attributes, which are essential to His character. To say that God is merciful and not just, would be utterly inconsistent. But whilst infidels and unbelievers seek to deprive man of the happiness and bliss the Bible holds out to him, they at the same time try to persuade him that God will not take cognizance of the sins which are contracted, or the faults which are committed in this world. They evidently forget that the God, whose infinite compassion is so great that He will not visit man with retributive justice in a future state, does not adopt the same mode of procedure in this world. Wherever we look, or in whatever direction we turn our steps, do we not see much misery ? Do we not behold a great deal of sorrow and suffering ? Do we not hear of hearts breaking ? Do we not see tears, that refuse to be wiped away, welling down the haggard cheek ? Are we not witnesses of the bereavements and mourning that occasionally afflict every household ? Surely that God, who is to be so infinite in mercy in His dealings in the future, would, we should imagine, manifest the same pity to poor sinners in this world. But you know perfectly well, my hearers, that wherever you turn, you behold the signs that a curse has fallen upon our world, that a blight has smitten our universe ; and you also know that God, in His infinite mercy and compassion, has removed that curse, has taken away that blight, and, by the sacrifice of His own Son, has opened a way to heaven to every believer. Does not the Old Testament tell us that God has ‘no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live ?’ His appeal to guilty man is, ‘Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die ?’ Surely God need not have given us a Bible, if salvation was to be finally



extended to every human being. Of what use is the Bible to us, if the Eternal (to use the language of the unbeliever) does not take notice of the actions which are done by men—if there is no final judgment, no final hell, no punishment for the wicked, no reward for the righteous. Nature herself teaches us a different lesson. In fact, she represents in the events which daily occur, what the Bible in words so plainly describes. She proves to us most palpably, that the world is not what it must have been when it first started into existence, at the fiat of the Creator. Look at that beautifully plumaged bird, so lovely and graceful, hopping from tree to tree in unconscious security, suddenly snatched away and torn by an unsightly vulture. Gaze at that elegant deer, sporting so mirthfully and joyously on the wild moor, unexpectedly pounced upon and mangled by the fierce leopard. The very breeze which fans our over-heated brow on a hot summer's day, may, and very often does, carry destruction and death to the ship freighted with hundreds of immortal beings. Surely our world cannot be, at present, what it was, when God looked upon it, and pronounced it 'very good.' "

The preacher then proceeded to compare Christianity with Judaism, indicating, that they in common recognize the perfect love and goodness of God. But they diverge, when the conditions under which that love and goodness are manifested, are understood and weighed.

"To illustrate all these grand and sublime truths, the limits of a brief discourse will certainly not suffice. We may, however, just advert to a few of the many declarations contained in Scripture, to guide you in examining at your leisure the beautiful vision sketched by the hand of prophecy, and destined, as we hope, ere long to receive its more complete fulfilment. That it is God's desire that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and live, is evident from the very first utterances of prophecy, 'that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.' Centuries rolled by, and Satan continued his usurped empire. Then the note of blessing is again heard, for God said unto Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This promise is repeated again and again, till at last it reaches its climax in the words preceding my text: 'The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'

"But, it may be asked, to whom do these grand and magnificent prophecies point? Who will this promised Redeemer be, who is 'to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house,' or 'to whom the Gentiles shall seek?' We turn to the New Testament, and there the enigma finds its solution, the prophecy its accomplishment. We there behold, in the child born at Bethlehem, Him whom Micah predicts as the ruler 'whose goings forth have been of old, from

everlasting.' In Him who was called Jesus, we recognize the 'Emanuel' of Isaiah, the 'Lord our Righteousness' of Jeremiah, and the 'Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven' of Daniel; in the sufferer on the cross, 'the man of sorrows, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.' In fact, the birth and titles of this august personage, as well as the period of His appearance, the treatment He should experience, and the effects His life, death, and resurrection were to produce, are so minutely delineated, that one almost wonders how persons professing to believe in the Bible can yet reject or controvert what the omniscient Spirit has in the clearest language revealed. And that there is no contrivance to make the events narrated in the New Testament harmonize with those predicted in the Old, is evident from the facts the evangelists themselves relate. Reflect for a moment on the announcement of the birth of Jesus, as recorded in Luke i. 32: 'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest;' or, 'the Gospel must be published among all nations,' Mark xiii. 10. And does not every generation and century during the last eighteen hundred years bear witness to the fulfilment of this wonderful prediction? Now what human forecast or conjecture could possibly have contrived, that the child born in Bethlehem should yet be called by the whole civilized world 'the Son of the Highest,' or that the story of one crucified on Calvary, should be proclaimed as the message of mercy, and the tidings of salvation, throughout the whole universe?"

The characteristics of the Christian religion are further enforced, in such terms as might arrest the attention of his Jewish hearers, and show how Moses and the Prophets bore testimony to Christ.

"But not only does Christianity draw up our affections to a Father reconciled to His children; it also meets every inquiry and suggestion that can possibly arise in our minds. Doubts, scepticism, and infidelity do not spring from the study of God's Word; on the contrary, from a neglect of it. Numbers of people, instead of going to 'the fountain of living waters, hew themselves out cisterns which can hold no water.' They gain their knowledge of Scripture from sceptical books, and thus assail truths which they have never thoroughly examined nor investigated.

"Another proof that to Him who is the 'root of Jesse' the Gentiles were to be gathered, we have in the spread and progress of the Gospel of salvation. Every religion before Christ only found adherents in the country where it arose. Even Mosaism, the religion distinguished above all other systems and creeds by its Divine origin and purer morality, only gained a few proselytes from surrounding nations. Christianity, on the contrary, humble in its beginning, and opposed in its progress, has achieved triumphs, which to the very end of time attest its Divine origin and mission. Its Founder was, we are told by the prophet, 'a root out of a dry ground' (Isa. liii. 2). He was not surrounded by the pomp and

splendour which attend earthly princes, nor did He seek to win followers by promises of temporal advantages. 'Let the dead bury their dead,' was the answer given to him who only sought to go home, and wait till his father was consigned to the grave, ere he declared himself a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus. Devoid of attraction, divested of all splendour as the religion of Jesus must have appeared to the proud Pharisee, the philosophising Greek, and the sneering Roman, it has gathered the Gentiles in homage and adoration around the footstool of David's Son and David's Lord.

"Before the advent of Christ, 'darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.' With the exception of Israel, an insignificant nation, mankind were sunk in idolatry, wretchedness and vice. They had changed the glory of God into the similitude of 'birds, four-footed beasts, and creeping things.' This too at a time when man made great progress in secular knowledge, and in the various arts which tended to charm and embellish life. He could erect magnificent temples, stately halls and monuments, that even in their ruin and decay excite the wonder and admiration of every beholder; yet whilst he could accomplish such feats as these, his spiritual perceptions were so blunted, that he worshipped the creation of his own hands, and bent his knee to the very reptile he could crush under his foot. The Gospel came like a light from heaven to dissipate this moral darkness, and myriads of hearts pulsated with love, joy and peace.

"There is another striking feature in Christianity, which stamps it with universality, and this is its simplicity. It does not, like Judaism—not that new, spurious system called Reformed Judaism, but that Orthodox Rabbinical creed—demand years of hard study before a moderate knowledge of all its requirements is obtained. Of the hundreds of Israelites who attend the synagogue, few only understand the religion to which they are attached. And this is the case with all false creeds. They are either overburdened with rites and ceremonies few ever thoroughly master, or enshrouded in mysteries no one can ever penetrate. The Gospel, in striking contrast to all these human systems, simply bids us 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' It, indeed, contains mysteries; but mysteries no Christian would wish to penetrate or to understand. They are mysteries fragrant with blessings for time and eternity.

"My Christian friends, before I close, permit me to remind you that Christ was revealed from heaven in order that by the sacrifice of Himself He might vindicate God's justice, and remove every impediment that opposed the sinner's restoration to His favour and love. Now sin must be something very heinous in the sight of God since it demanded such a sacrifice. Sometimes we are told that there is nothing fascinating in sin. This is not true. Sin has its

attractions, gratifications, and charms. Its delights are, however, not lasting ; they are transient, and then comes the retrospect, with its remorse, grief, and shame. On the other hand, a godly life is a perpetual source of comfort and joy. It never causes a blush or pang. It blesses in this life, and it holds out the sure and certain promise of the life that is to come.

“And as the Gospel is an invincible power against sin, so it is also a source of comfort in the struggles we have continually to encounter. There are sorrows, trials and disappointments, inseparable from our present state of existence. The wicked in that respect do not form an exception to this universal law. They, like the Christian, have to breast many a storm, and to sustain many a keen conflict. There is, however, this difference : the Christian recognizes in every dispensation the loving hand of a gracious Father, and is happy and resigned ; the ungodly turns to the world, and its frown sinks him into despondency and despair.”

There were many points, in which Mr. Stern rose to the highest excellence as a **SPEAKER**. There was an unhesitating flow of well-chosen and expressive language. It seemed to his hearers, as if the most suitable and vigorous forms of speech were always at hand, to convey to them the facts which he wished to relate or to illustrate. Frequently, there was burning eloquence in his narrations, but at all times his natural and easy delivery, and picturesque descriptions, commanded universal attention. Few could fail to desire to hear him again, who ever had the opportunity of hearing him once.

Three quotations from his speeches at the Annual Meetings of the London Society, in Exeter Hall, are now given. They mark the several epochs of his association with Abyssinia, and represent him as sounding the note of his arrival after his first journey—the call to return thither, to which he so readily responded—and the strain of thanksgiving, in which he recorded his return from thralldom and suffering.

“It is only a few months ago that I was in Abyssinia, and when I compare the assemblies I had then to address with the audience just now before me, I feel the contrast to be so powerful, and the change to be so striking, that the question almost involuntarily starts to my lips, Why should a God of love and benevolence permit one portion of this domain of humanity to be plunged in perpetual darkness, whilst another is continually enjoying a progression in spiritual and intellectual light ? To this startling and perplexing query, the first page of prophecy gives, however, a direct and positive reply. It tells us in a language that cannot be misin-

terpreted, that sin hath darkened the understanding, and corrupted the human heart. But the Word of God does not pause here, it does not plunge us into an abyss of misery, and then leave us to perish in despair; it does not fulminate against us denunciations of wrath without unfolding at the same time a prospect of mercy; on the contrary, upon the lowering clouds shines a bright bow of hope, and in the rolling thunder are heard the accents of redeeming love. The Infinite Himself provides the means for the recovery of the finite, and the pure and holy, atones for the sin of the polluted and the guilty.

“Time would not allow me, to traverse with you all the districts and provinces I visited, but this I can truly say, that my missionary tour through Abyssinia, notwithstanding the troubles and difficulties which we had to encounter—notwithstanding the many dangers and trials we had continually to submit to—notwithstanding that we were often reduced to circumstances which, I believe, would have excited the compassion and sympathy of a guardian of one of your workhouses, or of the Superintendent of one of your refuges, so much were we reduced as regards external appearances—that the journey, from the causes I have specified, was one of uninterrupted delight and continual joy. Frequently we visited three or four settlements in a day, and everywhere the woman busy in her hut, and the peasant working in his field, left the plough and the grinding stone to hear the white messengers of the cross. Some men followed us for days and days over mountains and valleys, through deep ravines and over rocky cliffs; and when we inquired why they accompanied us, the reply invariably was, ‘We want to know more of the Redeemer of Israel whom you proclaim.’ The desire to possess the written Word was quite equal to the desire to hear the preached Word. I might advert to several instances, where men had come from Quara and Simien, the lowest and the highest lands in Abyssinia, to get a copy of God’s Word for their community, and as in many instances the limited stock which we could carry did not permit us to satisfy the demand of every applicant, men far advanced in life, and whose hardened features had never been moistened by a tear, sad and mournful, squatted down near our tent, weeping and sobbing as if their hearts would break.

“Many Christians, who believe that the Gospel can and does convert the degraded and benighted Pagan, doubt its power when brought in contact with the heart of the obstinate and stiff-necked Jew. Now, our Lord did not teach us to cherish such thoughts. He did not say to His disciples, go to all tribes and kindreds, traverse every region and clime with the message of my love, but waste not your time and energies on this wicked race, this sin-stained people. Such was not the commission with which the Divine Redeemer charged His disciples. No! He pitied His enemies, prayed for His persecutors, and manifested His benevolence and compassion on His very murderers. And can any one doubt, that



the Gospel which could melt with tears of penitence men whose eyes were still gleaming with the fire of hate and revenge, and lead them to exclaim in the language of contrition and despair, 'What must we do to be saved?' I say, can any one after witnessing such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit, doubt its efficacy in the present day, in converting the obstinate Jew and inveterate scoffer? Thank God! our Gospel has not lost its Divine power since the day that Peter preached, and three thousand men were converted; on the contrary, the evidences of its saving efficacy are witnessed in all lands and in all climes, where the exiles of Zion have found a refuge and a home. Away then with selfish excuses and unworthy pleas, and instead of these, let pity affect, hope arouse, and benevolence prompt you in this holy and God-honouring work. In your prayers, in the midst of your numerous comforts, in the abundance of all your blessings and privileges, Oh, think on the poor Jew; think on him not as the banker and wealthy merchant, not as the statesman and politician, but think on him as he is in Arabia, the persecuted and oppressed, the outcast and despised; think on him as he is in Africa, agonized in soul and tormented in heart; aye, think on him as he stands on a lofty rock, and by one fearful leap into the rolling and foaming stream, seeks pardon and acceptance by a premature death. I am sure if you think on him thus, you will help to arrest this tide of misery; you will do all you can to stem this torrent of woe."

When the call had been given for his return to Abyssinia, it was in these terms that he alluded to it, at the Annual Meeting in 1862.

"A fortnight ago, I thought that by this time I should be afloat on the Mediterranean, speeding my way back to Constantinople. My passage was almost engaged, my last interview with the Committee appointed, and in my heart and imagination I was already traversing the narrow lanes and crowded alleys of the Jewish quarter in the city of the Sultan; when news reached us from Abyssinia, which entirely changed my destination. And now, instead of going to Constantinople, I have once more to grasp my pilgrim's staff, and wander over the sun-burnt deserts and arid plains of Africa. My Lord, I fear that many in this Hall who are acquainted with my missionary career, will be inclined to think that I am a regular wandering Jew, and quite unable to concentrate my energies and efforts on a limited and confined sphere of labour; but I am quite confident that there are some gentlemen on this platform, who will bear me witness, that I do not possess that mercurial disposition for which I now and then receive credit; on the contrary, if ease and personal comfort were to me an object of the slightest value, I should much prefer the shores of the Bosphorus, to the wild scenes around the lake Tzana, and the city of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, to the capital of King Theodorus. My Lord, when I occupied the place in which I now stand a year ago, I spoke about our newly opened

missionary sphere in Abyssinia, from whence I had then just returned. I alluded on that occasion to our hopes and disappointments, our expectations and trials; but whilst I felt perfectly confident, from the numerous indications of the Divine favour which we had then experienced, that our work, notwithstanding the numerous obstacles which we should meet with, would still gather daily fresh strength, and gain continually deeper root, I yet did not anticipate such unclouded sunshine of prosperity as that which God in His infinite mercy has been pleased to vouchsafe to our mission. The letters which were received very recently from Abyssinia, fully justify the anticipations which I then so fondly expressed. Our missionaries in that country all unite in stating, that there is a great and wonderful movement among the Falashas. One missionary states in his letter, that a whole Jewish village at Genda, together with their teacher, (Debterah Beroo,) to whom I alluded in my journal as one of the most intelligent and best informed Jews in Abyssinia, had formally declared their full conviction of the truths of the Gospel, and their unanimous desire to obtain baptism.

“Have we not ample proofs in the history of the Church, that the opposition of man is frequently the opportunity for the display of the power of God? We know that the Gospel of Christ had to contend against an infuriated priesthood and a blinded people, and yet that very faith, which man in his vindictive rage thought to quench in the blood of redeeming love, achieved the greatest trophies from among that very class who stood around the Cross, and in malicious rage exclaimed: ‘Away with Him. Crucify Him, crucify Him.’ And if we go back to the remotest period of history, we shall invariably find, that light has had to struggle with darkness; and truth, however triumphant at last, has had to contend against error. Talk of difficulties, when we have a throne of grace; of obstacles, when engaged in a Divine work, and aided by a Divine Saviour. Sooner might we expect that the astronomer could arrest the sun in his course, and the mariner command the heaving ocean to be still, than that God should be unfaithful to His promises, or retard the subjugation of sinful men to the sway of the Gospel of Christ.

“I recollect that about fourteen months ago, when in Egypt, I met two ladies—one the daughter of a distinguished Irish Prelate, the other the daughter of a well-known Divine now gone to his rest. These two ladies had visited the banks of the Nile to recruit their impaired health; but the sight of the banded myriads, leagued against God and His Anointed, moved their heart’s compassion; and instead of attending to their own interests, they went about tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and instructing the helpless and young. And if we go to any distant sphere, where the missionary with patient steps has explored the dark domains of humanity, we invariably find ladies—nursed in every luxury, gifted with every accom-

plishment, and adorned by every grace and virtue—instructing the ignorant, taming the savage, and rearing amidst scenes of wretchedness and sin, abodes of holiness and peace. Now I trust, that our friends on this platform will emulate such examples, and that one, if not more, will resolve this day in their hearts to accompany me to Africa, to carry the tidings of salvation to the poor Falashas, who are perishing for lack of knowledge on the mountain tops of Abyssinia.

“It has been my privilege to preach Christ in different countries and in different languages, but I must add that the power of the sermon lay too frequently in the force, energy, and fervour of the speaker; and if the discourse was not in a thrilling, moving, and melting strain, there would be seen the heavy eye, the nodding head, and the furtive glance at the watch or clock. But in Abyssinia, where I have preached the Gospel with a stammering tongue and a faltering lip, I never saw the poor worshipper weary to hear, so long as I was not weary to preach. I reiterate, that I would not go back to that remote country, and encounter all the hardships of an African missionary tour, if I did not feel a yearning desire, a deep solicitude, and anxious longing for the welfare of that remnant of Israel, who are collected together on the highlands of Africa.”

In his concluding observations the President—the Earl of Shaftesbury, said: “When I consider the state of things in Abyssinia, when I think of the opening that God has made for us, and of the opportunities which are now afforded—when I think of the door standing so wide open into which we hesitate to enter—when I reflect on the importance of the work to be done, and remember that we sit passively here, I ask for what purpose this Society exists—if you, having the means of addressing yourselves to hundreds and thousands who not only have no aversion to Christianity, but are anxious to receive it, fail to address yourselves to the work, and to make an appeal to the whole country to come forward to your assistance? I declare to you, that, if I were not so advanced in life as I am, I should almost be tempted myself to take Orders and go out as a missionary to the Jews in Abyssinia. My friend Mr. Stern has so warmed my heart, as he always does when he speaks on this subject, that I would, if I were not so old, go out and join him in this great and holy work; for I believe, that no part of the Lord’s vineyard was ever more ready for the harvest than is this. Mr. Sheridan once said, that the Jew was like the blank leaf between the Old and New Testament. What a wonderful, graphic description that was!

See, then, what is offered to you. How many thousands of blank leaves are offered to you, on which may be written the everlasting truths of the Gospel of Christ ; on which may be written the name of Christ Himself in indelible characters, and with respect to which, after the accomplishment of your good and holy work, you may say, with Christian emphasis, ‘What I have written I have written.’”

Seven years after this time, Mr. Stern stood on the same platform. The tale he had to tell to his audience, was one on which there needs to be no further comment.

“I would briefly advert to that country where I experienced so many mercies, sustained so many hardships, and witnessed such palpable interpositions of Divine providence. Few spheres of missionary enterprise on the wide domain of our universe presented a more promising aspect to the Christian husbandman than Abyssinia; King Theodorus was not, as it has been erroneously stated, opposed to me and the work in which I was engaged. Again and again he reiterated, that our efforts depended not on his sanction, but on that of the Aboona Salama. That good and honest man, who received his training in a school of the Church Missionary Society, openly countenanced and encouraged the preaching of the missionaries and the circulation of God’s Word. He has been most grossly misrepresented by interested parties. All sorts of unfounded slanders have been heaped on his name, but I shall always revere his memory, and so no doubt will my friend to the left (Mr. Rassam), and most of my fellow-captives, as that of a man who did everything in his power to mitigate our sufferings, to alleviate our wants, and, had it been possible, to effect our freedom. He died in October, 1867, and his last moments bore striking testimony to the faith he cherished. Death had already laid his icy hands upon him, his eyes were already growing dim, the world and its scenes and actors were already fading from his view—still he did not forget his friends in the dungeons of Theodorus, but almost with palsied fingers wrote small notes to Mr. Rassam and myself, in which prayers for our release were mingled with his dying expressions of trust, faith, and confidence in the mercy of the Redeemer. Supported by such an archbishop, and encouraged by the Falashas, our mission promised to become a kind of focal power to irradiate far and wide that region of moral and spiritual night. In a very limited period of time the Gospel had been successfully preached, the Word of God had been freely and widely circulated, many schools had been established, several native Scripture-readers had been trained, and from fifty to sixty converts had been collected around our missionary station, to form a kind of nucleus of an enlightened Christian community. These incipient results invested our mission with prospects so bright and dazzling, that in the delightful anticipations

of the future, we heeded not the transitory clouds, as we imagined, which began to cast their ominous forewarning shadows over the present. The difficulties in which we were subsequently involved, the dangers that hemmed us in on every side, did not weaken, but deepened those impressions which our preaching during the period of liberty had produced. The people had heard and acknowledged not only the preaching of the Gospel, but that we also suffered indirectly for the truth of the Gospel. And it was equally well-known, for the lips of many a soldier proclaimed it, that although King Theodorus had thrown us into prison, and had bound us in galling fetters, he had not sealed our lips, nor interdicted us from preaching in our prisons. Yes, in that terrible jail, and on that awful rock of Magdala, there was often heard, amidst the clang of fetters and the groans of the captive, the expressions of true repentance towards God, and of faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Those impressions were not transitory or ephemeral. The soldiers, and the few Chiefs who were drawn around us, were not attracted by curiosity or the gifts which we could bestow. We had nothing to offer, for we were very poor. They came around us simply to hear the truth we proclaimed, and the Scripture difficulties which we solved. To show that this is not a varnished missionary statement, I will only allude to one incident, which I presume even the most inveterate unbeliever in the success of foreign missions cannot controvert, or designate a platform exaggeration. It was toward the end of February, 1868, that we heard that King Theodorus, accompanied by his lumbering and useless cannons, was gradually crawling on towards the fortress in which we were imprisoned. We had anticipated that the Expedition would forestall his arrival, and so prevent those dangers in which we were now involved. But King Theodorus approached, and the Expedition was still at a considerable distance. Our doom appeared now, humanly speaking, decided; and the crisis of our sad history appeared inevitable. Death—a slow, cruel, torturing death, stared us in the face. In this difficulty, I consulted one of our best Christian friends. I sent for him, and by some kind of manœuvre he was admitted into my cell. I said to him, ‘You pretend to be my friend, and to be sincerely attached to me; now prove your friendship, and give ocular demonstration of your love. We are in great peril, every minute we expect that the messenger of death will come to us.’ He replied, ‘I will aid you if you suggest any means of escape.’ I rejoined, ‘How many men have you on whom you can depend?’ ‘Thirty, or perhaps forty,’ was the answer. ‘Well, then,’ I returned, ‘you must help us to escape out of this horrid rock.’ ‘I am ready,’ was the response, ‘to abet your enterprise; but rest assured, if you make an effort to storm the gates, you will accelerate your own death, and involve us and our families in the same doom.’ I persisted. I told him he must show by his works the sincerity of his professions. I communicated what he had said to my friend Mr. Rassam, as well as to every one of my



fellow-captives. We considered the question of our escape in all its bearings, and at last came to the conclusion that the attempt would prove abortive, and not only involve us in a very cruel death, but bring a similar doom upon the poor soldiers who aided us, and their innocent wives and children. We abandoned the plan, but it demonstrated that those men were not only Christians by profession, but they were like those disciples in times of old, who were ready to pluck out their eyes in order to render a service to the Apostle, through whom they had been brought to a knowledge of Him whom to know is life everlasting. That genuine spirit of Christian piety, love and devotion, evinced by many of our guards, exerted a beneficial influence on our fellow-prisoners, and many manifested a most anxious desire to become acquainted with the Gospel of Christ. I procured them several copies of the Scriptures, and these were continually in the hands of anxious readers and hearers, who drew from the pages of inspiration lessons of comfort during their imprisonment, and of peace during the awful moment of their execution and death."

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### TESTIMONIALS OF RESPECT AND AFFECTION.

The extent to which any tangible expression should be given of our regard for others, and the form which such testimonials should assume, has always been a matter of opinion. There are many, whose claims are overflowing on the practical sympathy of their fellow-men, whose worth and services never receive the slightest recognition. On the other hand, it may be admitted, that there are some persons in the world, whose deserts have been altogether incommensurate, with the honours and benefits which they have received.

The history which is drawing to a close, sets forth the character of one, whose services to his fellow-men, and whose devotion to his heavenly Master, could hardly be over-estimated. That he had only "respect unto the recompense of the reward," none could fail to acknowledge ; but it is not less satisfactory to know that there were occasions, when those who honoured and loved him, gave him some substantial evidence, of their admiration for his character and labours. One of a significant kind was mentioned in the early part of this Biography, when the Commodore, Officers, and Seamen, comprising the Squadron of the East India Company, cruizing in the Persian Gulf, sent to him an inscribed Silver Inkstand, as an evidence of their sense of his worth.

Among his fellow Hebrew Christians, Mr. Stern was regarded with affectionate reverence and love. His unobtrusive character, manly virtues, and consistent life, commended him to their unfailing sympathy ; and although Gentile Christians were liberal in their

contributions to any fund which was intended for his benefit, every movement in this direction was initiated by his Hebrew brethren. The nature of their regard is well expressed in an address which they presented to him, after the death of his wife, Charlotte Elizabeth Stern. This event took place on January 1st, 1874. The faithful and affectionate partner of his life, the one whose gentle devotion and blameless life had commended her to the affectionate interest of a large circle of friends—the one who had been truly the sharer of his deepest sorrows and of his most hallowed joys, was called away, after a short illness, into her Divine Master's presence. Her afflicted husband, and five surviving children—two sons and three daughters—were the chief mourners. But the Jewish proselytes sorrowed with their sorrow. "She had wept," wrote Mr. Stern, "when listening to the tale of woe they had to tell, and now their honest, manly tears, fell in profusion over the grave which was to receive her mortal remains. A few days after the funeral, the largest room in the Wanderers' Home was crowded by a mournful assembly of Jewish proselytes, who came from all parts of the Metropolis, to present me with the following engrossed and tastefully-illuminated letter of condolence," which bore one hundred and ten signatures:—

'Reverend and dear Sir,—We, Christian believers of the House of Israel, desire to express our unfeigned sorrow and deep sympathy with you and your orphaned children, under the heavy weight of affliction by which you are bowed down. Many of us, whose signatures are appended to this written expression of condolence are indebted to your instrumentality for the saving knowledge we possess of that Gospel, which alone opens a sure and joyful prospect of immortality beyond the grave. Whether in the Bible-class, at the prayer-meeting, or in the pulpit, you have always sought to unfold to us the Divine purposes of redeeming love; and you have taught us, as pilgrims and strangers, to look daily forward to the blessed realities of eternity. Even those among us who live at a distance from your immediate missionary and ministerial sphere, but whose hearts' desire and prayer for Israel is, that they might be saved, have been in the habit of looking up to you as a zealous representative, and an able and affectionate advocate of our cause. Bound together, therefore, by so many strong and peculiar ties of varied and manifold relationship, we naturally long to give expression to the feelings of deep sorrow which your heavy bereavement has stirred up in our hearts; we desire, if possible, to assuage your

grief by the assurance that each of us share in it, and that we bewail your loss as if we had personally sustained it.

‘We need not point you to the consolations which the Gospel so richly supplies to believing mourners. Your whole life has been spent in comforting your Jewish brethren, under the severe tribulation which almost invariably attends their entrance into the kingdom of God. You have done more—you have shown them a noble example of Christian fortitude, under terrible suffering, endured for their sake and the Gospel, in the wilds of Africa. Your eye of faith has often pierced through the darkest cloud of sorrow which for a time obscured your natural vision. Thus your own personal and habitual experience has lent additional weight to your repeated admonitions, that we, too, should learn to disregard the things of time and sense, that we should renounce the visible for the invisible, and seek to realize the spiritual joy of heaven. Now, therefore, that you are again passing through the furnace of affliction, we feel confident that you are not without that solid comfort which has been your support under previous trials, and which you know so well how to hold out to others. In this confidence, we are confirmed by the calm Christian resignation, the subdued and noble sorrow, which you and yours have exhibited under your bereavement. Such a frame of mind can only be created and maintained by the deeply-rooted conviction, that your beloved wife has only been taken from you for a time; that she has exchanged a life of conflict for one of ineffable and never-ending rest, and that when your own earthly warfare is over, you will meet her among the throng of the redeemed, in the immediate presence of the Saviour.

‘We are, Reverend and dear Sir,

‘In deep sympathy, yours.’”

Soon after the joyous excitement of Mr. Stern’s deliverance and return from Abyssinia had moderated, steps were taken to raise a Testamental Fund on behalf of the chief sufferers. The Rev. Dr. Ewald, with true-hearted earnestness, took the lead in this movement. His desire was, and that of others who cordially united with him in this project, that it should reach the sum of one thousand pounds. About £680 was contributed for this purpose. After the payment of incidental expenses, the amount presented to Mr. Stern was £336. If it was not commensurate, in the judgment of those who collected it, with the claims of him whose life and labours had been a spectacle “to angels and to men,” it was gratefully received, as among those Divine providences, which had traced and sanctified every step in the past.

The thirtieth Anniversary of Mr. Stern’s Ordination, at Jerusalem, fell on the 14th of July, 1874. His admission into Priests’ Orders

took place at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on December the 23rd, 1849. His Hebrew Christian brethren, and other friends, determined to commemorate the latter event, by making it the occasion of another manifestation of their love and sympathy. The sum of £133 was raised, and a Presentation made to the veteran Missionary of a Silver Salver, a Silver Tea and Coffee Service, the three volumes of Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, and a purse of fifty sovereigns.

The Presentation was accompanied by the following Address:—

“We, the undersigned, acting as the representatives of numerous friends and well-wishers, desire to express to you our sincere congratulations, that you have been spared in the good pleasure of God to arrive at the thirtieth year of your Ministry as Priest in the Church of England, a Ministry on which we feel confident the favour of Heaven has rested, but of which the full results will only be revealed in Eternity.

“We cannot but return thanks to Almighty God in that He has raised you up to take so active an interest in all that concerns the spiritual condition of His ancient people, the Jews, for the success which has attended your efforts in that direction, and for the loving interest you still evince in all that is put forward for their benefit.

“We have now the pleasant task of begging your acceptance of the accompanying Silver Service, Dr. Smith's Dictionary, together with a purse of money, as a small token of the high esteem we entertain for you, and our appreciation of the services you have rendered to the cause of Israel.

“February 28th, 1880.”

It was not long after this event, that the same energetic and loving friends determined, that their regard should take another form. It was in itself an evidence, that habitual contact with the object of their attachment, deepened their respect, and desire to do him honour. It was justly considered, that one who, without claiming to be a learned man, had reached a high position in the literary world, and whose attainments entitled him to be enrolled among men of letters, should receive a suitable Degree. It is not unlikely, that had the proposal been made, one of our English Universities would have conferred an Honorary Degree upon the distinguished Traveller. But application was made to the Archbishop of Canterbury, that on Mr. Stern should be conferred the Lambeth Degree of Doctor of Divinity. An Indian Bishop recoiled with alarm from the intimation conveyed to him by the Archbishop,



that the cost of this honour would be fifty-seven pounds. But even this immoderate sum, did not suffice to cover Dr. Stern's expenses, or satisfy the fees demanded by exacting archiepiscopal officials. The gracious acquiescence of the Archbishop in this application, involved an outlay of seventy-six pounds. This was much in excess of the estimate. The amount subscribed for the purpose amounted to only £53.

It has occasionally happened, that Missionaries of lengthened experience, and of acknowledged capacity, have been elected as Members of the General Committee of the London Society. The Rev. J. C. Reichardt occupied this position for many years, and subsequently the Rev. Dr. Ewald became a Member of the Correspondence Committee. It was not, however, till the year 1884 that Dr. Stern was elected a Member of that body. The wisdom of admitting him into its councils was manifest. His characteristic straightforwardness was in itself a pledge for the honesty with which any advice would be given, and his widespread knowledge and experience, opened a fund of information of unbounded value. This distinction—insignificant as it was—he thoroughly appreciated; which was shown by his regular attendance at the Committee meetings, where he was a thoughtful adviser in the many questions which from time to time required a solution.

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## CHAPTER L.

### THE VICTORIA INSTITUTE. HEBREW-CHRISTIAN PRAYER UNION.

Dr. Stern was necessarily brought into contact with men of great scientific and philosophical attainments. The Victoria Institute, of which the Earl of Shaftesbury was President, had been established for the purpose of combating the influence of the subtle, refined, and scientific infidelity which had gained a considerable hold on the educated classes. The archæology, and the monuments and customs of the East, afford a large field of enquiry, and many remarkable collateral evidences bearing upon Revelation. With these Dr. Stern had become acquainted; and although he might not be classed among distinguished Orientalists, he possessed considerable knowledge, which was fitted to throw light on the complex questions which were frequently brought before the Council. To this important Institute he was elected an Associate, and he frequently took a part in the debates which followed the valuable Papers which were read at the Meetings. One example will suffice, in order to indicate the manner in which he treated these subjects. "Biblical Proper Names, personal and local, illustrated from sources external to Holy Scripture," had formed the theme of discussion. Dr. Stern's old ally, Mr. Rassam, had taken a part in it, and to this he refers.

"I am glad to be able to follow Mr. Rassam here. I have in former days followed him to some places where it has been agreeable enough to do so, and to others when it has not been quite so pleasant; but on the present occasion I am delighted to follow him upon the subject which has engaged your attention. There cannot be the least doubt that in the Scriptures, the names that are used have a reference either to localities, to historical events, to the worship of the true God, or to the worship of idols. It is remark-

able, that in the very beginning, we find that a name is frequently erroneously translated in the English, or recognised version, as 'Hebrew.' It appears very strange that we should find Abraham translated as the 'Hebrew.' Now, Abraham, at the very period at which it is so interpreted, constituted a very small and limited family. Again, we find that the name Joseph, continually mentioned during the Egyptian period, is designated as 'Hebrew.' Now, any one acquainted with the word 'Abur' knows that it does not mean Hebrew; it really means 'one to pass over,' 'a stranger,' 'a pilgrim,' 'a foreigner,' and thus explains why it was that Joseph met with so gracious a reception from Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. The 'Pharaoh' of the time of Joseph was, I believe, one of the last of the shepherd Kings—the 'Hyksôs'—so that it is easy to understand that he sympathized with Joseph as being a stranger in Egypt, and immediately exalted him with great honours. In the interesting paper to which we have just listened, there occurs several times a name which is certainly one of great importance and significance—the name of 'Baal,' and also that of 'Bosheth'; and I was glad to hear Mr. Tomkins say that he took these for two distinct and separate deities. He said the name 'Baal' and that of 'Bosheth' were not the same; and on looking back to the various passages of Scripture in which those names occur, it is perfectly evident that they are intended to represent two distinct and different deities. It is true the word occurs in Greek with the feminine article, and this has evidently led some people to suppose that the two names are identical; but the word 'Baal' also occurs, where we have the masculine article. Then there is the passage in Ezekiel, to which reference has been made in the paper, and it throws some light on the subject, for the Prophet says—"The young men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword." Now, 'Beseth' and 'Bosheth' would appear to be the same. The Hebrew, as every one knows who is acquainted with the language, is easily transposed without absolutely destroying the identity. Now, 'Bubastis' was a goddess of the Egyptians, whom Herodotus compares with Diana. She was worshipped in the form of a cat, and festivals were held in her honour. I have been led to make these few remarks because I find in most commentators and writers on the names in the Bible, that they have confounded 'Baal' and 'Bosheth,' as if they were the same. Of course there are other names which deserve serious consideration, and I trust the members of this Institute will on some future occasion again take up the subject."

In another work of sacred and permanent value, Dr. Stern took a prominent part. This was the formation of a "Hebrew-Christian Prayer Union," by which Christian Israelites, in all parts of the world, might be bound together in holy sympathy and love. In 1847, when I was an undergraduate in the University of Cambridge,

I was the instrument of founding the first of these organizations, which has become the fruitful mother of many noble children. One of the most youthful of these scions, was "The Hebrew-Christian Prayer Union," of which Dr. Stern became the first President. It has formed a happy bond of union among these believers who are scattered over the whole world. It also affords a special opportunity for spiritual communion, among the Christian Israelites, who dwell in the Metropolis. Concerning it we read:—

"The history of this Union is a very brief and interesting one. For some years past, many of our brethren living in England and in other parts of the world, have on various occasions expressed a hope, that a day might come when Hebrew Christians would have the opportunity of more frequently meeting together for their mutual spiritual improvement and edification. It will be remembered by many of the brethren, that this feeling gave rise to the formation in 1867 of the 'Hebrew-Christian Alliance,' under the presidency of the lamented Dr. Schwartz, who laboured indefatigably in promoting the spiritual welfare of our beloved nation, and of brotherly love and union amongst ourselves. The same feeling, and the same Christlike love and zeal, prompted your Committee to revive and re-establish this Union under a more modest title, but having the same object in view, viz., the glory of God and the mutual welfare of the brethren in the Lord Jesus.

"We who believe that God answers the prayer of the faithful, and have ourselves realized its power, have felt also, that prayer is the best bond and basis of union between Hebrew Christians of all denominations, and when thus united, we shall be true sons of Israel, who prevailed with God in prayer.

"Though we are united by a national tie, and by the common bond of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour, yet we feel that in our dispersion all over the world, we need a special link of union to cement us more closely to each other, to exercise an united influence upon our people, upon the Church and the world at large. Our aspirations are certainly national, but not in an ecclesiastical or political sense, but in the sense of the command, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.'"

In giving an extract from the third Report, which the sequence of the reference to the Union demands, we anticipate the sad event which is recorded. It was but a short time that our brother lived to preside over the honoured band, who had personally known the power of intercessory prayer.

"Our bond of union, is Jesus Christ, crucified and risen again, our Brother and our Divine Lord. As we have found in Him our own

personal Saviour, when He brought many—yea, all of us, by a way that we did not at first know whither it would lead to—to the knowledge of the Gospel, so we believe that He will eventually bring all the lost sheep of the house of Israel, in a wonderful manner, to His fold, and will be the only Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. Our national resurrection and restoration is not a dream, but a reality; therefore, we feel bound to bear a united and public testimony before our nation and the whole world, of our faith in Christ, and of our well-grounded hope that Israel will yet be as life from the dead, a spiritual galvanizing and electrifying element to the nations of the earth. We have specific duties as Hebrew Christians, and these are, to quote the words of our esteemed brother, the Rev. Dr. Edersheim, ‘To wake the Church to a Scriptural and spiritual view of her relation to Israel, and to make known the glorious Gospel to our Jewish brethren, by lifting up a testimony for Christ in every land, that so ‘the remnant’ may be called out and saved, and preparation made for a greater and wider work, which, although apparently unconnected with our present Missions, is none the less the direct outcome of them.’

“Among the events that have taken place among us as a body, we record first of all, with great solemnity and sorrow of heart, the loss by death of several members, amongst whom was our first President, the Rev. Henry Aaron Stern, D.D., whose name was revered in all the Churches. He was like his name, a star—yea, a burning and shining light, that shone alike in the desert of Arabia, and in the prison of Abyssinia, and in the capitals of Turkey and of England; often indeed obscured by clouds of trouble and of untold suffering, yet triumphant to the last, by the strength of Him whom he so faithfully served, and whose presence he ever felt near. We cannot omit to quote a few words from one of the funeral sermons—from that preached by the Rev. J. B. Barraclough, the Chaplain of the Jews’ Episcopal Chapel, Palestine Place. ‘Dr. Stern’s has been a grand career of 40 years’ missionary work. . . . May we not say with one who knew him well, ‘What Livingstone was for missionary endurance, Stern was for missionary courage and heroism.’ But if others thus speak of him, we who knew him so intimately—many of us whom he had begotten in the faith, and who enjoyed his friendship and love, can scarcely find words to describe the loss to us and to the Church. But, thank God, we know that he is in glory, and has received the promise: ‘And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever’ (Dan. xii. 3).

“We conclude this remembrance of our departed brother and President in the words of the Rev. Gordon Calthrop: ‘Whilst we mourn for his bereaved family, and whilst we feel for ourselves that one more strong and valiant man has been taken away from amongst the ranks of the toilers of the kingdom, we are thankful for the brave warrior who has fallen in his harness on the field of battle,



who has fought valiantly the good fight of faith, and has gone to grasp the crown of life and immortality and glory, which the Lord Himself gives to all those that love His appearing.' ”

Previously to this Dr. Stern wrote himself : “ St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, exclaims, ‘ Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.’ It must have sounded strange to the ears of a Roman to hear such language from the lips of a despised Jew. What interest could a Roman take in the spiritual welfare of this people ? They were not a nation distinguished for military prowess, poetic genius or artistic skill. On the contrary, they were regarded as a rebellious, unsocial and superstitious race. But the Apostle addressed his epistle to believers, to men who loved the Saviour, and yearned to promote His glory in the salvation of souls. His exclamation might excite the contempt of the proud and the godless, the lover of art and the student of philosophy ; but, in the heart of the Christian, he knew that it would touch a responsive chord and find a sympathetic echo. Now if the Apostle of the Gentiles, notwithstanding all the ill-treatment he had received from his countrymen, could not restrain his ardent solicitude for the spiritual welfare of his people, ought we not to imitate his example, and pray earnestly and perseveringly that God, in His infinite mercy, may remove the veil that has so long hid the Saviour from their sight, and cause them to look unto Him, whom their fathers pierced ? ”

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## CHAPTER LI.

### THE CLOSE OF DAY.

We are about to enter upon the last stage of one of the most eventful and remarkable of lives. It is no exaggeration to say, that its incidents and its lessons are more than worthy of being read—they are worthy of being studied. If indomitable resolve—if absolute self-sacrifice—if simplicity of purpose and sincerity of heart, are to hold an honoured place in the estimation of the just and the thoughtful—the readers of this Biography will make it one of their text-books, for the exhibition of these higher characteristics of the defaced, but yet distinctly marked outlines of the image of God, still traced in the work of His hands. My introduction demanded, that in Dr. Stern we should see the defects of a fallen nature, as well as the power of regenerating grace. He stands on the common platform of our humanity, with all its need, its sinfulness and its weakness. Inscribed upon every feature of this life, are the inspired words, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

But if the student of human character desires to learn, how Divine strength is made perfect in the weakness of the people of God—if he seeks to know, how, by a concentration of moral, spiritual, and physical forces, a feeble man may be enabled to surmount difficulties which appear to be insurmountable, and to attain ends which reach beyond all that is possible to mankind—then the current of this history will have given him a key to these mysteries. In the Divine Government, the instruments are so subordinated to the great controlling Power, by which the machinery of providence and grace is

directed, that the weakest and most insignificant factor, is oftentimes that, upon which the most momentous consequences are made to rest. But those whom the Lord employs, are generally fitted in a special manner for the work to which they are called. It is His prerogative to carry out His own designs as seemeth best to His infinite wisdom ; but His instruments are usually prepared by favourable antecedent circumstances, and by the communication of such endowments, as may best fit them for their office. It is not eulogistic, nor ill-timed, to reiterate the estimate already given of the subject of this Biography ; and to affirm, that no thoughtful and dispassionate mind could question, the great and distinguished faculties with which he was endowed by God. That athletic frame—that finely chiselled countenance, and lustrous eye—that air of intelligence and conscious integrity of purpose which invited confidence and assured of sympathy—that faithful and uncompromising adherence to duty and to truth. These clustered around mental gifts and powers of no ordinary kind, and a constant readiness to employ them for the glory of God, and the true welfare of his fellow men. Nor was there any perceptible decay of these powers. The sufferings of the past, which had undermined that vigorous constitution, left no outward and unmistakeable evidences of their existence. He had been so trained in the furnace of adversity, that their presence could only be betrayed, when they became acute beyond endurance. But even at those seasons when nature asserted her claim to rest, and the afflicted body bowed under the burden, the mind and thoughts maintained their brightness and vivacity. The anxieties which such illnesses brought in their train, were dispelled by his speedy return to activity and duty.

Thus passed the last few years of the Missionary's life, unaffected but by one event of importance and interest. On March 3rd, 1883, nine years after the death of his first wife—Dr. Stern was united to Miss Rebecca Davis Goff, the third daughter of S. D. Goff, Esq., of Horetown, Co. Wexford. With this lady he had been long acquainted, and well was she fitted to add to his domestic joys, and to bear her part in the duties and responsibilities of his vocation. Nor had they any fears at that time concerning the prolongation of their union. Those distressing symptoms which had

yielded to careful treatment and timely rest in the past, would, it was hoped, continue to be subjugated, under the Divine blessing, to the strength of a noble constitution, and an abstemious habit of life. In the autumn of the same year, he made a short tour on the Continent. It was with deep interest that Dr. Stern visited with his bride the city of Frankfort-on-the-Maine, in which so many instructive years of his boyhood had been passed. He was enabled still to point out in the picturesque "Judengasse," the house in which he had lived with his parents. The demolitions which had taken place, had hitherto spared the ancient structure, which had been hallowed by many filial associations, and youthful resolves. The world had at that time spread its panoramic beauties before his eager imagination, and instilled a longing to know and to learn. That desire had been gratified. But how little could he have conceived, at what a cost, such knowledge and experience would be attained ! The reminiscences of his early years, could hardly fail to awaken the echoes of those footsteps, which had marked his onward life ; and to clothe with solemn remembrances the "forty years," during which the Lord his God had been leading him in the wilderness of the world.

Our Missionary brother resumed his usual duties. These were carried out with indefatigable and punctilious regularity. The habit of early rising had always been maintained, and enabled him to keep up a correspondence with converts and enquirers, which was of importance to them, and encouraging to himself. The extracts from the Reports of "The Wanderers' Home," sufficiently indicate how days and even nights were generally employed. He was always so welcome and attractive as a representative of the London Society, that his presence as an advocate at public meetings continued to be eagerly sought. On specific occasions, his name was announced in some of the principal provincial towns, as about to preach a special Sermon to "Jews and Christians." No opportunity was neglected, by which he might bear witness to his Jewish brethren, concerning the Gospel of Christ ; nor seek to exalt the name and person of Him, who is the "Root and the Offspring of David."

On Friday, March 27th (1885), we met at the Committee Meeting of the London Society. At its close, we greeted each other ; and,

in reply to my enquiries, he said, "I am not well." It was in such mild and cautious language that he alluded to the growth of disorder, and the presence of suffering, which in a few weeks from that time, would enrol his relatives and friends among the mourners for the dead.

Early in the month of April, however, he undertook at the request of the Committee of the London Society a Mission to Dublin on some important official business; returning to England on the 23rd. On Sunday evening, the 25th, he preached on behalf of the Society at Immanuel Church, Streatham Common, from which he returned greatly exhausted. He never left his home again.

The month of April passed, and May arrived. The Anniversary Meeting of the London Society took place in Exeter Hall, on Friday, the 8th. That well-known form was not there. This was observed, and it was the theme of sorrowful comment. "He was ill," it was said, and there was a public expression of regret, that the Meeting was not cheered by his presence.

The Servant of God was on his dying bed. The messenger of death, which had so often approached his earthly tabernacle—whose hand had on so many occasions appeared about to strike, and whose presence and call had at times been so ardently desired—was now about to enter in, and to give the final summons. Yet the anxious watchers were more influenced by hope than by fear. The calmness with which suffering was endured, gave an unfaithful index of its ravages and its extent. He had rallied from attacks apparently as serious in times past, and why should they doubt, that by the good hand of the Lord upon him, he might again be restored!

It is said, that at times, on the approach of death, the events of life pass before the mind in rapid review, or present a vast panorama to the wondering imagination. We may well conceive, that to mental faculties clear and lucid to the last, such a vision may have been vouchsafed. Memory, with all its subtle and refined instincts, might depict to the dying Christian the scenes and circumstances of his former history. There, was the first Jewish home in the village of Unterreichenbach—the young student in the city of Frankfurt,—the merchant's clerk in the busy town of Hamburg. And



now he is speeding across the seas to London, the great emporium of the world ; where the talismanic touch of fortune will elevate him among the merchant-princes of the earth. But the fondly cherished hopes become a painful dream, and privation and perplexity are his daily attendants. In this way a Divine hand is leading him on. He goes to the Christian temple to cavil, but he returns to pray. And now, with humbled pride, but stern resolve, he is content to gain by honest toil his daily bread, so that he may obtain "the Pearl of great price." The tender bonds which bind him to those whom he loves are severed ; and separated from those to whom he has been most closely united, he hears no voice but that of "Jesus."

Rays of light begin to cross that dark and rugged way. It is about to be made plain, why, and how, the Lord hath thus been leading him on. He is consecrated to the great vocation of a Missionary to his own brethren. In the Holy City itself, in which the Lord of glory gave His testimony, he is ordained to the office of the Ministry. The field on which he is about to enter will tax his highest powers, and test his utmost endurance. Here the vision presents its dark shadows, as well as its bright and comforting outlines. He visits scenes which are tracked with the blood of his brethren according to the flesh. His heart is wrung with anguish, as he beholds their sorrows and their oppression, in the lands of their dispersion. But he bears to them the tidings of a Saviour's love, and comfort and peace are breathed into many a troubled soul.

From Bagdad and Persia, the Genius of Memory transports him to the shores of the Bosphorus. There again, he enters into those intricate fields of labour, which stretch beyond the Turkish Capital to all the adjacent lands, and even to the scattered tribes dwelling in the Crimean Peninsular.

One of the hopes of many years is about to be realized. As the Christian "*Dervish*," holding aloft the Standard of the Gospel, he is now traversing the wilds of Arabia. A new world opens to his view. The down-trodden remnant of his people, are here crushed beneath the heel of the oppressor. He comes to minister to their consolation, and to leave seeds of life, which shall be fruitful in blessing. With bleeding feet, he scales those mountain passes, and journeys over those arid plains. Lawless robbers seize him, and

conspire to put him to death; but no weapon which is formed against him can prosper. He returns in safety to the land of his adoption, to tell of all that the Lord has wrought.

The scene is again changed. He is among the mountains and plains of Abyssinia. He beholds the beams of the Word of God illuminating the hearts of the Falashas and idolatrous Abyssinians. But the fair landscape is enshrouded with gloom, and terrors of darkness burst forth from those threatening clouds. What a retrospect is here! Do those years of unspeakable tribulation, convulse and harass the soul of the dying Missionary? No! They are overshadowed by the sense of the love and faithfulness of God. They are sanctified by the power and reality of prayer. They have been among the "light afflictions," endured only for "a moment,"—to be followed by "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." He is passing onward towards the shores of eternity. As those scenes of the past recede from his mental vision, they are illumined with a heavenly light, reflected from the throne of the Divine glory. They have been among the "all things" which "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

*"His sun is gone down while it was yet day."*

It had been a life in which all had been "day." The seasons of the greatest tribulation had been among the most blessed and honoured. Throughout the whole of his pilgrimage, he had been "instant in season and out of season," in publishing the Words of eternal life. There had been no cessation from his holy calling. He was but sixty-five years of age, but how long had been that life, if reckoned by the extent of his labours! It had hardly been generally known that he was seriously ill. With sudden surprise, the announcement reached a multitude of sorrowing friends, that Dr. Stern had died, on Wednesday afternoon, (May the 13th, 1885.)

*"He is not dead but sleepeth."*

The funeral Service was performed in the Society's Chapel, at Palestine Place, on the following Monday, May the 18th, in the presence of a large congregation of Christian Israelites and other sympathising friends, including many representatives of the London

Society, and other kindred Missionary Institutions. Many accompanied the members of the family, to the City of London Cemetery, at Ilford, where rest his mortal remains with those of his first wife, until that day, when

*“ Them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him.”* .

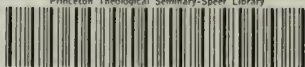








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